

EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

In 1988, Congress passed legislation for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) that continued its primary mission of providing dependable and comprehensive information about educational progress in the United States. In addition, for the first time in the project's history, the legislation also included a provision authorizing voluntary state-by-state assessments on a trial basis.

As a result of the legislation, the 1990 NAEP program included a Trial State Assessment Program in which public-school students in 37 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories were assessed in eighth-grade mathematics.¹ The 1992 NAEP program included an expanded Trial State Assessment Program in fourth-grade reading and fourth- and eighth-grade mathematics, with public-school students assessed in 41 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories.²

The continuation of NAEP's Trial State Assessment program in 1994 was authorized by additional legislation that enlarged the state-by-state assessment to include non-public school students. In addition to the state assessment program in reading at grade 4, the 1994 NAEP involved national assessments of reading, geography, and history at grades 4, 8, and 12. The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program was conducted in February 1994 with 44 participants (41 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the Department of Defense Education Activity [DoDEA] Overseas Schools).

This computer-generated report describes the reading proficiency of fourth-grade students in Idaho, the West region, and the nation. The distribution of reading proficiency results and reading achievement level results are provided for groups of students defined by shared characteristics: race/ethnicity, type of location, parents' education level, and gender. Contextual information about reading policies, instruction, and home support for reading is presented for public school students. State results are based on the representative sample of students who participated in the 1994 Trial State Reading Assessment Program. Results for the region and the nation are based on the regional and national representative samples of students who participated in the national NAEP assessment.

¹ For a summary of the 1990 program, see Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Eugene H. Owen, and Gary W. Phillips. *The State of Mathematics Achievement: NAEP's 1990 Assessment of the Nation and the Trial Assessment of the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1991).

² For a summary of the 1992 assessment of reading, see Ina V.S. Mullis, Jay R. Campbell, and Alan E. Farstrup. *The NAEP 1992 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993). For a summary of the 1992 assessment of mathematics, see Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Eugene H. Owen, and Gary W. Phillips. *NAEP 1992 Mathematics Report Card for the Nation and the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993).

School and Student Participation in the Reading Assessment

In Idaho, 98 public schools and 7 non-public schools participated in the 1994 fourth-grade reading assessment. These numbers include participating substitute schools that were selected to replace some of the nonparticipating schools from the original sample. The weighted **school** participation rate after substitution in 1994 was 91 percent for public schools and 89 percent for non-public schools, which means that the fourth-grade students in this sample were **directly** representative of 91 percent and 89 percent of all the fourth-grade public and non-public school students in Idaho, respectively.

In Idaho, 2,598 public school and 94 non-public school fourth-grade students were assessed in 1994. The weighted **student** participation rate was 96 percent for public schools and 96 percent for non-public schools. This means that the sample of fourth-grade students who took part in the assessment was **directly** representative of 96 percent of the **eligible** public school student population and 96 percent of the **eligible** non-public school student population in **participating** schools in Idaho (that is, all students from the population represented by the participating schools, minus those students excluded from the assessment).

The **overall** weighted response rate (school rate times student rate) was 88 percent and 86 percent for public and non-public schools, respectively. This means that the sample of students who participated in the assessment was **directly** representative of 88 percent of the eligible fourth-grade public school population and 86 percent of the eligible fourth-grade non-public school population in Idaho.

Following standard practice in survey research, the results presented in this report were produced using calculations which incorporate adjustments for the nonparticipating schools and students. Hence, the final results derived from the sample provide estimates of the reading proficiency and achievement for the **full** population of eligible public and non-public school fourth-grade students in Idaho. However, these nonparticipation adjustments may not adequately compensate for the missing sample schools and students in instances where nonparticipation rates are large.

In order to guard against potential nonparticipation bias in published results, NCES has established minimum participation levels necessary for the publication of 1994 Trial State Assessment results. NCES also established additional guidelines that address four ways in which nonparticipation bias could be introduced into a jurisdiction's published results (see Appendix A).

Students' Reading Performance

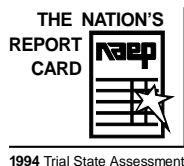
The table below shows the distribution of reading proficiency of fourth-grade students attending public schools in Idaho, the West region, and the nation.

1994, Public School Students

The average reading proficiency of fourth-grade public school students in Idaho on the NAEP reading scale was 214. This average was not significantly different from that of students across the nation (213).³ The lowest performing 10 percent of public school fourth graders in Idaho had proficiencies at or below 164 while the top 10 percent had proficiencies at or above 259. In public schools across the nation, the lowest performing 10 percent of fourth graders had proficiencies at or below 158; the top performing 10 percent of students had proficiencies at or above 261.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

There was a decline in the average performance of fourth-grade public school students in Idaho from 1992 to 1994 (221 in 1992 and 214 in 1994). During the same period, there was no significant change in the average performance of fourth-grade public school students across the nation (216 in 1992 and 213 in 1994).

***Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Public School Students***

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
1992						
Idaho	221 (1.0)	180 (1.9)	201 (1.2)	222 (1.1)	242 (1.1)	259 (1.5)
West	213 (1.7)	163 (3.6)	189 (2.0)	215 (1.8)	239 (1.5)	259 (1.6)
Nation	216 (1.1)	168 (1.7)	193 (1.1)	218 (1.4)	241 (1.4)	261 (1.9)
1994						
Idaho	214 (1.4) <	164 (3.0) <	191 (2.4) <	217 (1.8)	240 (1.4)	259 (1.5)
West	213 (2.1)	155 (3.7)	187 (2.8)	218 (2.4)	242 (1.8)	262 (2.6)
Nation	213 (1.1)	158 (2.4) <	188 (1.6)	218 (1.2)	242 (1.2)	261 (1.4)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation $>$ ($<$) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

³ Differences reported as significant are statistically different at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that with 95 percent confidence there is a real difference in the average reading proficiency between the two populations of interest.

Performance According to Purpose for Reading

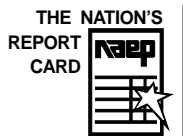
The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program considered students' performance in situations that involved reading different kinds of materials for different purposes. The fourth-grade reading assessment measured two global purposes for reading — **reading for literary experience** and **reading to gain information**. The table below provides results for Idaho, the West region, and the nation according to each reading purpose.

1994, Public School Students

The proficiency of public school students in Idaho in reading for literary experience (217) was not significantly different from that of students across the nation (215). Similarly, in reading to gain information, the proficiency of public school students in Idaho (210) did not differ significantly from that of students across the nation (211).

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

Idaho's public school fourth graders showed a decline from 1992 to 1994 in reading for literary experience. Similarly, in reading to gain information, public school fourth graders in Idaho exhibited a decline from 1992 to 1994.



1994 Trial State Assessment

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Public School Students According to Purpose for Reading

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Reading for Literary Experience						
1992 Public						
Idaho	224 (1.2)	180 (2.2)	203 (1.3)	226 (1.2)	247 (1.2)	264 (1.6)
West	217 (1.7)	167 (3.6)	192 (3.0)	219 (2.1)	243 (3.0)	264 (1.9)
Nation	218 (1.1)	169 (1.7)	194 (1.5)	220 (1.3)	244 (1.3)	265 (1.4)
1994 Public						
Idaho	217 (1.3) <	169 (1.8) <	195 (1.7) <	220 (1.0) <	242 (1.0) <	260 (1.1)
West	214 (2.3)	156 (3.5)	188 (3.5)	219 (2.0)	243 (2.4)	263 (2.1)
Nation	215 (1.1)	160 (1.8) <	190 (1.3)	219 (1.1)	244 (1.1)	263 (1.3)
Reading to Gain Information						
1992 Public						
Idaho	217 (1.1)	175 (2.5)	197 (1.6)	218 (0.9)	239 (1.2)	257 (2.0)
West	208 (2.0)	156 (3.0)	183 (2.9)	211 (2.6)	236 (2.1)	257 (3.3)
Nation	213 (1.2)	162 (1.9)	188 (1.5)	215 (1.1)	239 (1.3)	260 (1.8)
1994 Public						
Idaho	210 (1.7) <	156 (2.1) <	184 (2.0) <	213 (2.2)	239 (1.6)	261 (1.7)
West	211 (2.2)	151 (4.3)	184 (3.2)	216 (2.9)	243 (2.3)	264 (2.2)
Nation	211 (1.2)	153 (1.8) <	184 (1.6)	215 (1.6)	241 (1.4)	263 (1.4)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Levels of Reading Achievement

The most recent reauthorization of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) continues the Board's responsibilities to set policy for NAEP and to "develop appropriate student achievement levels for each age and grade in subject areas tested" (Pub. L. 103-382).

NAGB developed three achievement levels for each grade — Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Performance at the Basic level denotes partial mastery of the knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade level. The central level, called Proficient, represents solid academic performance at each grade level tested. Students reaching this level demonstrate competency over challenging subject matter and are well prepared for the next level of schooling. Performance at the Advanced level signifies superior performance at the grade tested. Definitions of the three levels of reading achievement are given below. Chapter 3 provides further elaboration of these levels and presents examples of types of questions that students at each of the three achievement levels can respond to effectively.



1994 Trial State Assessment

Description of Fourth-Grade Reading Achievement Levels

Achievement Level	Scale Cutpoint	Description
ADVANCED	275	Fourth-grade students performing at the <i>Advanced level</i> should be able to generalize about topics in the reading selection and demonstrate an awareness of how authors compose and use literary devices. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to judge texts critically and, in general, give thorough answers that indicate careful thought.
PROFICIENT	243	Fourth-grade students performing at the <i>Proficient level</i> should be able to demonstrate an overall understanding of the text, providing inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections to their own experiences. The connection between the text and what the student infers should be clear.
BASIC	212	Fourth-grade students performing at the <i>Basic level</i> should demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read. When reading texts appropriate for fourth graders, they should be able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences.

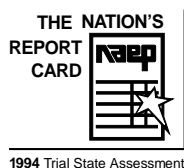
The table below provides the percentage of fourth-grade students at or above each achievement level, as well as the percentage of students below the Basic level.

1994, Public School Students

The percentage of public school students in Idaho who were at or above the Proficient level (22 percent) did not differ significantly from that of students across the nation (24 percent).

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

From 1992 to 1994, there was no significant change in the percentage of public school students in Idaho who attained the Proficient level (24 percent in 1992 and 22 percent in 1994). Similarly, there was no significant change in the percentage of public school students across the nation who attained the Proficient level (24 percent in 1992 and 24 percent in 1994).



Levels of Fourth-Grade Public School Students' Reading Achievement

	At or Above Advanced	At or Above Proficient	At or Above Basic	Below Basic
Percentage				
1992 Public				
Idaho	3 (0.5)	24 (1.3)	63 (1.3)	37 (1.3)
West	3 (0.5)	22 (1.6)	53 (1.9)	47 (1.9)
Nation	4 (0.6)	24 (1.2)	57 (1.2)	43 (1.2)
1994 Public				
Idaho	3 (0.5)	22 (1.3)	55 (1.6) <	45 (1.6) >
West	4 (0.7)	24 (1.9)	56 (2.5)	44 (2.5)
Nation	4 (0.5)	24 (1.1)	56 (1.2)	44 (1.2)

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Subpopulation Performance

Assessment results repeatedly show differences in performance for subpopulations of students.⁴ The 1994 Trial State Assessment provides additional information about the performance of important subpopulations by reporting on the reading proficiencies of various subgroups of the public school student population defined by race/ethnicity, type of location, parents' education level, and gender. These results are summarized in the table on page 8.

⁴ Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Jay R. Campbell, Claudia A. Gentile, Christine O'Sullivan, and Andrew S. Latham. *NAEP 1992 Trends in Academic Progress*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1994).

Race/Ethnicity

1994, Public School Students. The average reading proficiency of White students in Idaho public schools was higher than that of Hispanic and American Indian students.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students. There was a decrease in the average reading proficiency of White and Hispanic public school students in Idaho from 1992 to 1994. There was no significant change in the average reading proficiency of American Indian public school students in Idaho from 1992 to 1994.

Type of Location

1994, Public School Students. The average reading proficiency of Idaho students attending public schools in central cities was not significantly different from that of students in urban fringe/large towns and rural areas/small towns.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students. From 1992 to 1994, there was a decrease in the average reading proficiency of students attending public schools in central cities and rural areas/small towns in Idaho. From 1992 to 1994, there was no significant change in the average reading proficiency of students attending public schools in urban fringe/large towns in Idaho.

Parents' Education Level

1994, Public School Students. Public school students in Idaho reporting that at least one parent graduated from college demonstrated an average reading proficiency which did not differ significantly from that of students who reported that at least one parent had some education after high school but was higher than that of students who reported that at least one parent graduated from high school, neither parent graduated from high school, or they did not know their parents' education level.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students. Public school students in Idaho who reported that neither parent graduated from high school or they did not know their parents' education level had a lower average reading proficiency in 1994 than in 1992. The average proficiency of public school students in Idaho who reported that at least one parent graduated from college, at least one parent had some education after high school, or at least one parent graduated from high school did not change significantly between 1992 and 1994.

Gender

1994, Public School Students. In public schools in Idaho, girls exhibited an average reading proficiency which was higher than that of boys.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students. In Idaho public schools, the average reading proficiency for boys was lower in 1994 than in 1992. Similarly, the average proficiency for girls was lower in 1994 than in 1992.



*Fourth-Grade Public School Students' Average
Reading Proficiency by Subpopulation*

		1992	1994
		Proficiency	
RACE/ETHNICITY			
White	Idaho	224 (0.9)	218 (1.4) <
	West	222 (1.8)	223 (2.0)
	Nation	224 (1.4)	223 (1.3)
Hispanic	Idaho	202 (2.5)	189 (3.2) <
	West	197 (2.7)	187 (4.3)
	Nation	200 (2.2)	190 (2.7) <
American Indian	Idaho	206 (2.7)	205 (5.3)
	West	*** (**.*)	*** (**.*)
	Nation	206 (5.0)	201 (3.6)
TYPE OF LOCATION			
Central City	Idaho	226 (2.3)	214 (3.1) <
	Nation	208 (1.5)	205 (2.3)
Urb Fringe/Lrg Town	Idaho	222 (2.1)	220 (3.3)
	Nation	221 (2.2)	220 (1.9)
Rural/Small Town	Idaho	219 (1.4)	212 (1.8) <
	Nation	218 (2.5)	214 (1.8)
PARENTS' EDUCATION			
College graduate	Idaho	229 (1.2)	225 (1.8)
	West	221 (2.8)	224 (2.3)
	Nation	224 (1.6)	223 (1.3)
Some educ after HS	Idaho	229 (2.0)	222 (3.3)
	West	224 (3.7)	222 (5.0)
	Nation	223 (2.4)	222 (2.2)
HS graduate	Idaho	215 (2.4)	211 (2.2)
	West	211 (4.2)	203 (3.9)
	Nation	212 (1.8)	208 (1.9)
HS non-graduate	Idaho	206 (4.4)	189 (4.6) <
	West	196 (5.6)	189 (6.5)
	Nation	198 (2.8)	189 (3.4)
I don't know	Idaho	213 (1.2)	205 (1.6) <
	West	208 (1.6)	204 (2.3)
	Nation	210 (1.3)	206 (1.3)
GENDER			
Male	Idaho	218 (1.1)	210 (1.6) <
	West	208 (2.6)	208 (2.5)
	Nation	212 (1.4)	208 (1.3)
Female	Idaho	223 (1.2)	218 (1.7) <
	West	218 (1.4)	218 (2.4)
	Nation	220 (1.1)	219 (1.2)

School sample size is insufficient to permit reliable regional results for type of location.

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level. *** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Reading Performance of Non-Public School Students

The 1994 Trial State Assessment marks the first time that non-public school students were assessed at the state level. Therefore, separate non-public school results can be reported for Idaho. Also, results based on a combined sample of public and non-public school students can be presented. The following table shows the distribution of overall reading proficiency for the non-public school and combined populations.

Non-Public School Students

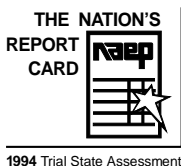
The average reading proficiency of fourth-grade students in non-public schools in Idaho was 219. This average was not significantly different from that of non-public school students across the nation (232).

Public and Non-Public School Student Comparison

The average reading proficiency of fourth-grade students in non-public schools in Idaho was not significantly different from the average for public school students (219 for non-public and 214 for public). For the nation, the average reading proficiency for non-public school students was higher than that of their public school counterparts (232 for non-public and 213 for public).

1994, Public and Non-Public School Students Combined

The average reading proficiency of grade 4 students from Idaho was 214. This average did not differ significantly from that of students across the nation (215). The lowest performing 10 percent of fourth graders from Idaho had proficiencies at or below 164 while the top 10 percent had proficiencies at or above 259. The lowest performing 10 percent of students across the nation had proficiencies at or below 161 while the top 10 percent had proficiencies at or above 263.



Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Students, Non-Public and Combined Schools

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
1994 Non-Public						
Idaho	219 (9.7)	171 (18.8)	197 (19.8)	223 (8.7)	245 (10.7)	264 (4.8)
West	224 (6.1)	177 (10.9)	203 (7.8)	225 (5.7)	249 (6.1)	269 (5.3)
Nation	232 (2.5)	189 (3.8)	212 (2.3)	234 (2.5)	254 (2.0)	272 (2.5)
1994 Combined						
Idaho	214 (1.4)	164 (3.1)	192 (2.9)	217 (1.8)	240 (1.5)	259 (1.7)
West	213 (1.9)	156 (4.3)	188 (2.6)	218 (2.6)	243 (1.9)	262 (2.3)
Nation	215 (1.0)	161 (1.9)	191 (1.2)	219 (1.1)	243 (1.1)	263 (1.5)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details).

A Context for Understanding Students' Reading Proficiency in Public Schools

Information on the reading performance of students in Idaho can be better understood and used for improving instruction and setting policy when supplemented with contextual information about schools, teachers, and students.

To gather contextual information, the fourth-grade students participating in the 1994 Trial State Assessment, their reading teachers, and the principals or other administrators in their schools were asked to complete questionnaires on policies, instruction, and programs. The student, teacher, and school data help to describe some of the current practices and emphases in reading education, illuminate some of the factors that appear to be related to fourth-grade public-school students' reading proficiency, and provide an educational context for understanding information on student achievement. Highlights of the results for the public-school students in Idaho are as follows:

CURRICULUM COVERAGE AND INSTRUCTIONAL EMPHASIS

- In Idaho in 1994, average reading proficiency was similar for students regardless of how much time their reading teachers spent on reading instruction on a typical day.
- According to the public school administrators in Idaho, in 1994, 79 percent of the fourth-grade students were in schools where reading was identified as receiving special emphasis. This percentage was not significantly different from* that of students across the country (85 percent).
- In 1994, according to their reading teachers, 10 percent of the students in public schools in Idaho were typically taught reading in a class that was grouped by reading ability. The prevalence of ability grouping was higher across the nation (22 percent).

DELIVERY OF READING INSTRUCTION

- Students in Idaho whose teachers used both basal and trade books demonstrated an average reading proficiency (214) which did not differ significantly from that of students whose teachers primarily used basal readers (210).
- The proficiency of Idaho students whose teachers used both basal and trade books (214) was not significantly different from that of students whose teachers primarily used trade books (217).
- The proficiency of Idaho students whose teachers primarily used trade books (217) was not significantly different from* that of students whose teachers primarily used basal readers (210).

* Although the difference may appear large, recall that "significance" here refers to "statistical significance." (See Appendix A for further discussion.)

- In Idaho, 33 percent of the fourth-grade students had reading teachers who used children's newspapers and/or magazines at least once a week; 17 percent of the students had reading teachers who used reading kits at least once a week; 17 percent had reading teachers who used computer software for reading instruction at least once a week; 72 percent of the students had reading teachers who used a variety of books at least once a week; and, finally, 70 percent of the students in Idaho had reading teachers who used materials from other subject areas at least once a week.
- According to the Idaho reading teachers, 58 percent of the students were asked to discuss new or difficult vocabulary almost every day. This percentage did not differ significantly from that of students across the nation (62 percent).
- According to their reading teachers, the percentage of students in Idaho who were asked to talk with each other almost every day about what they have read (34 percent) was not significantly different from that of students across the nation, where 34 percent of the students were asked to do this activity almost every day.
- According to the reading teachers in Idaho, 4 percent of the students were asked to do a group activity or project about what they have read almost every day. This figure was not significantly different from that of students across the nation (5 percent).

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF TEACHERS

- The percentage of students who were being taught by reading teachers who reported having at least a master's or education specialist's degree in Idaho (21 percent) was smaller than that for the nation (41 percent).
- More than half of the students (59 percent) had reading teachers who had the highest level of teaching certification that is recognized by Idaho. This did not differ significantly from the figure for the nation, where 65 percent of the students were taught by reading teachers who were certified at the highest level available in their states.
- In Idaho, 26 percent of the students were being taught reading by teachers who had an undergraduate major in English, reading, and/or language arts. This was not significantly different from the percentage of students across the nation who were being taught by reading teachers with the same major (20 percent).

HOME FACTORS

- In Idaho, 31 percent of the students reported having four types of materials (a newspaper, an encyclopedia, 25 or more books, and magazines) in the home. This figure was lower than that for the nation (36 percent). Students in Idaho who had all four of these types of materials in the home showed an average reading proficiency (223) which was higher than that of students with zero to two types of materials (201).
- In 1994 in Idaho, 25 percent of the students discussed with friends or family what they read almost every day. This percentage was somewhat smaller than that of students across the nation (28 percent). The proficiency of students in Idaho who discussed what they read with friends or family almost every day (214) did not differ significantly from that of students who had discussions with friends or family less than weekly (209).
- Relatively few of the fourth-grade students (13 percent) watched six hours or more of television each day. This was smaller than the figure for the nation, where 22 percent of the students watched this much television. Average reading proficiency in Idaho was lowest for students who spent six hours or more watching television each day.

Comparisons of Overall Reading Proficiency in Idaho with Other States

The map on the following page provides a method for making appropriate comparisons of the overall public school reading proficiency in Idaho with that in other states (including Guam and the Department of Defense Education Activity [DoDEA] Overseas Schools) that participated in the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program. The different shadings of the states on the map show whether the average overall proficiency of public school students in the other states was statistically different from or not statistically different from that of public school students in Idaho ("Target State"). States in black have a significantly lower average public school proficiency than does Idaho. States with a dark-gray shading have a significantly higher average public school proficiency than does Idaho. States with a light-gray shading have an average public school proficiency that does not differ significantly from that of Idaho. The significance tests are based on a Bonferroni procedure for multiple comparisons that holds the probability of erroneously declaring the means of any two states to be different, when they are not, to no more than five percent. Two states — Idaho and Michigan — did not meet minimum school participation guidelines for public schools. Another jurisdiction — Washington, DC — withdrew from the Trial State Assessment after the data collection phase. Therefore, these three jurisdictions are not included in the comparisons depicted on the map on the following page.

RESERVED FOR MAP

OVERVIEW

For over 25 years, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has been the nation's primary indicator of student achievement, reporting on what students know and can do in various school subject areas at grades 4, 8, and 12. With legislation passed by Congress in 1988, NAEP's mission of providing dependable and comprehensive information about educational progress in the United States was expanded to involve a voluntary state-by-state assessment on a trial basis.

Consequently, the 1990 NAEP program included a Trial State Assessment Program in which public school students in 37 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories were assessed in eighth-grade mathematics.⁵ Building on this initial effort, the 1992 NAEP program included a Trial State Assessment Program in fourth-grade reading and fourth- and eighth-grade mathematics, with public school students assessed in 41 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories.⁶

The continuation of NAEP's Trial State Assessment Program in 1994 was authorized by additional legislation that enlarged the state-by-state assessment to include non-public school students:

The National Assessment shall conduct in 1994 . . . a trial reading assessment for the 4th grade, in states that wish to participate, with the purpose of determining whether such assessments yield valid and reliable State representative data. (Section 406(i)(2)(C)(i) of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended by Pub. L. 103-33 (U.S.C. 1221e-1(a)(2)(B)(iii)))

The National Assessment shall include in each sample assessment . . . students in public and private schools in a manner that ensures comparability with the national sample. (Section 406(i)(2)(C)(i) of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended by Pub. L. 103-33 (U.S.C. 1221e-1(a)(2)(B)(iii)))

⁵ For a summary of the 1990 program, see Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Eugene H. Owen, and Gary W. Phillips. *The State of Mathematics Achievement: NAEP's 1990 Assessment of the Nation and the Trial Assessment of the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1991).

⁶ For a summary of the 1992 assessment of reading, see Ina V.S. Mullis, Jay R. Campbell, and Alan E. Farstrup. *The NAEP 1992 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993). For a summary of the 1992 assessment of mathematics, see Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Eugene H. Owen, and Gary W. Phillips. *NAEP 1992 Mathematics Report Card for the Nation and the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993).

In addition to the state assessment program in reading at grade 4, the 1994 NAEP involved national assessments of reading, geography, and history at grades 4, 8, and 12.

The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program was conducted in February 1994 with the following 44 participants:

Alabama	Louisiana	North Dakota
Arizona	Maine	Pennsylvania
Arkansas	Maryland	Rhode Island
California	Massachusetts	South Carolina
Colorado	Michigan	Tennessee
Connecticut	Minnesota	Texas
Delaware	Mississippi	Utah
District of Columbia	Missouri	Virginia
Florida	<i>Montana</i>	<i>Washington</i>
Georgia	Nebraska	West Virginia
Hawaii	New Hampshire	Wisconsin
Idaho	New Jersey	Wyoming
Indiana	New Mexico	
Iowa	New York	Guam
Kentucky	North Carolina	<i>DoDEA</i>

Jurisdictions in italics — Montana, Washington, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Overseas Schools — did not participate in the 1992 Trial State Assessment Program. Two states — Idaho and Michigan — did not meet minimum school participation guidelines for public schools. Another jurisdiction — Washington, DC — withdrew from the Trial State Assessment Program after the data collection phase. Therefore, public school results for these three jurisdictions are not reported. Three jurisdictions — Ohio, Oklahoma, and the Virgin Islands — participated in the 1992 Trial State Assessment but not in the 1994 program.

For the 1994 Trial State Assessment in reading, a combined sample of approximately 2,800 public and non-public school students was assessed in most jurisdictions. The samples were carefully designed to represent the fourth-grade populations in the states or jurisdictions. Participating jurisdictions were responsible for the administration of the assessment. For jurisdictions that participated in the 1992 Trial State Assessment Program, contractor staff monitored 25 percent of public school sessions and 50 percent of non-public school sessions. For jurisdictions that did not participate in 1992, contractor staff monitored 50 percent of both public and non-public school sessions. Monitoring efforts were part of a quality assurance program designed to ensure that sessions were conducted uniformly.

The 1992 Trial State and National Assessment programs in reading were based on a framework developed through a national consensus process that was set forth by law and called for “active participation of teachers, curriculum specialists, subject matter specialists, local school administrators, parents, and members of the general public” (Pub. L. 100-297, Part C, 1988).⁷ This same framework served as the basis of the 1994 Trial State and National Assessment programs.

⁷ NAEP Reading Consensus Project. *Reading Framework for the 1992 and 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress*. (Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, U.S. Department of Education, 1994).

The process of developing the framework was carried out in late 1989 and early 1990 by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) under contract from the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) which is responsible for formulating policy for NAEP, including developing assessment objectives and test specifications. The framework development process included input from a wide range of people in the fields of reading and assessment, such as school teachers, administrators, and state coordinators of reading and reading assessment. After thorough discussion and some amendment, the framework was adopted by NAGB in March 1990. An overview of the reading framework is provided in Appendix A.

The 1994 fourth-grade Trial State and National Assessments in reading consisted of eight sections or blocks, each 25 minutes in length. All fourth-grade students in the assessment were required to complete two blocks. Each block contained a passage or set of passages and a combination of constructed-response and multiple-choice questions. Passages selected for the assessment were drawn from authentic texts used by students in typical reading situations. Complete stories, articles, or sections of textbooks were used, rather than excerpts or abridgements. The type of question — constructed-response or multiple-choice — was determined by the objective being measured. In addition, the constructed-response questions were of two types: *short constructed-response* questions required students to respond to a question in a few words or a few sentences while *extended constructed-response* questions required students to respond to a question in a paragraph or more.

This Report

This is a computer-generated report that describes the reading performance of fourth-grade students in Idaho, in the West region, and across the nation. A separate report describes additional fourth-grade reading assessment results for the nation and the states, as well as the national results for grades 8 and 12.⁸ This report consists of four sections:

- This Overview provides background information about the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program and a profile of the fourth-grade students in Idaho.
- Part One shows the distribution of reading proficiency results for the fourth-grade students in Idaho, the West region, and the nation.
- Part Two presents reading achievement level results for fourth graders in Idaho, the West region, and the nation.
- Part Three relates fourth-grade public school students' reading proficiency to contextual information about the reading policies, instruction, and home support for reading in Idaho, the West region, and the nation.

⁸ See *NAEP 1994 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995).

In this report, results are provided for groups of students defined by shared characteristics — race/ethnicity, type of location, parents' education level, and gender. Based on criteria described in Appendix A, data are reported for subpopulations only where sufficient numbers of students and adequate school representation are present. For public school students, there must be at least 62 students in a particular subgroup from at least 10 different schools. For non-public school students, the minimum requirement is 62 students representing at least 6 different schools. However, the data for all students, regardless of whether their subgroup was reported separately, were included in computing overall results for Idaho. Definitions of the subpopulations referred to in this report are presented below.

The results for Idaho are based on the representative sample of students who participated in the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program. The results for the nation and the region of the country are based on the nationally and regionally representative samples of students who were assessed in January through March as part of the national NAEP program. Using the national and regional results from the 1994 national NAEP program is necessary because of the voluntary nature of the Trial State Assessment Program. Since not every state participated in the program, the aggregated data across states did not necessarily provide representative national or regional results. Specific details on the samples and analysis procedures used can be found in the *Technical Report of the 1994 NAEP Trial State Assessment Program in Reading*.⁹

Race/Ethnicity

Results are presented for students of different racial/ethnic groups based on the students' self-identification of their race/ethnicity according to the following mutually exclusive categories: White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, and American Indian (including Alaskan Native). In 1992, the question posed to students regarding their racial/ethnic background had one Asian/Pacific Islander category. In 1994, these were two distinct response options for the question. Consequently, data and trend results for the separate categories are not available for the 1992 sample.

Type of Location

Results are provided for students attending public schools in three mutually exclusive location types — central city, urban fringe/large town, and rural/small town — as defined below. The type of location variable is defined in such a way as to indicate the *geographical* location of a student's school. The intention is not to indicate, or imply, social or economic meanings for these location types. The type of location variable, given the current NAEP sampling, does not support the reporting of regional results. Therefore, only state and national results will be presented.

Central City: The Central City category includes central cities of all Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA's).¹⁰ Central City is a geographic term and is not synonymous with "inner city."

⁹ *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995).

¹⁰ Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) as defined by the Office of Management and Budget.

Urban Fringe/Large Town: An Urban Fringe includes all densely settled places and areas within SMSA's that are classified as urban by the Bureau of the Census. A Large Town is defined as places outside SMSA's with a population greater than or equal to 25,000.

Rural/Small Town: Rural includes all places and areas with a population of less than 2,500 that are classified as rural by the Bureau of the Census. A Small Town is defined as places outside SMSA's with a population of less than 25,000 but greater than or equal to 2,500.

Parents' Education Level

Students were asked to indicate the extent of schooling for each of their parents — did not finish high school, graduated from high school, had some education after high school, or graduated from college. The response indicating the higher level of education was selected for reporting. Note that a substantial percentage of fourth-grade students did not know their parents' education level.

Gender

Results are reported separately for males and females.

Region

The United States has been divided into four regions for purposes of this report: Northeast, Southeast, Central, and West. States included in each region are shown in Figure O.1. All 50 states and the District of Columbia are listed, with the participants in the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program highlighted in boldface type. Guam and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Overseas Schools were not assigned to a region. Further, students attending schools in the part of Virginia that is included in the Washington, DC, metropolitan statistical area are included in the Northeast regional results; students attending schools in the remainder of the state are included in the Southeast regional results. Because most of the Virginia students are in the Southeast region, regional comparisons for Virginia are to the Southeast.

Regional results are based on national assessment samples, not on aggregated Trial State Assessment samples, as explained on the previous page. Thus, the regional results are based on a *different* and *separate* sample from that used to report the state results.

**FIGURE O.1***Regions of the Country*

NORTHEAST	SOUTHEAST	CENTRAL	WEST
Connecticut Delaware District of Columbia Maine Maryland Massachusetts New Hampshire New Jersey New York Pennsylvania Rhode Island Vermont Virginia	Alabama Arkansas Florida Georgia Kentucky Louisiana Mississippi North Carolina South Carolina Tennessee Virginia West Virginia	Illinois Indiana Iowa Kansas Michigan Minnesota Missouri Nebraska North Dakota Ohio South Dakota Wisconsin	Alaska Arizona California Colorado Hawaii Idaho Montana Nevada New Mexico Oklahoma Oregon Texas Utah Washington Wyoming

Note: Part of Virginia (near metropolitan Washington, DC) is included in the Northeast region, and the rest of Virginia is in the Southeast region.

Non-Public Schools

Samples for the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program were expanded to include students attending non-public schools (Catholic schools and other religious and private schools) in addition to the public school students. The expanded coverage was instituted for the first time in 1994. Samples for the 1990 and 1992 Trial State Assessment Programs had been restricted to public school students only. For those jurisdictions meeting pre-established participation rate standards (see Appendix A), separate results are reported for non-public schools and for the combined public and non-public school samples. The combined sample also contains students attending Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools and domestic Department of Defense schools. These two categories of schools are not included in either the public or non-public school samples. The DoDEA Overseas Schools are considered public schools and are reported as a separate jurisdiction for the first time in 1994.

Guidelines for Analysis and Reporting

This report describes reading performance for fourth graders and compares the results for various groups of students within that population — for example, those who have certain demographic characteristics or who responded to a specific background question in a particular way. The report examines the results for individual demographic groups and individual background questions. It does not include an analysis of the relationships among combinations of these subpopulations or background questions.

Because the percentages of students in these subpopulations and their average proficiencies are based on samples — rather than on the entire population of fourth graders in a jurisdiction — the numbers reported are necessarily *estimates*. As such, they are subject to a measure of uncertainty, reflected in the *standard error* of the estimate. When the percentages or average proficiencies of certain groups are compared, it is essential to take the standard error into account, rather than to rely solely on observed similarities or differences. Therefore, the comparisons discussed in this report are based on *statistical tests* that consider both the magnitude of the difference between the means or percentages and the standard errors of those statistics.

The statistical tests determine whether the evidence — based on the data from the groups in the *sample* — is strong enough to conclude that the means or percentages are really different for those groups in the *population*. If the evidence is strong (i.e., the difference is statistically significant), the report describes the group means or percentages as being different (e.g., one group performed *higher than* or *lower than* another group) — regardless of whether the sample means or sample percentages appear to be about the same or not. If the evidence is not sufficiently strong (i.e., the difference is not statistically significant), the means or percentages are described as being *not significantly different* — again, regardless of whether the sample means or sample percentages appear to be about the same or widely discrepant. The reader is cautioned to rely on the results of the statistical tests — rather than on the apparent magnitude of the difference between sample means or percentages — to determine whether those sample differences are likely to represent actual differences between the groups in the population. The statistical tests and Bonferroni procedure, which is used when more than two groups are being compared, are discussed in greater detail in Appendix A.

In addition, some of the percentages reported in the text of the report are given quantitative descriptions (e.g., relatively few, about half, almost all, etc.). The descriptive phrases used and the rules used to select them are also described in Appendix A.

Finally, in several places in this report, results (mean proficiencies and percentages) are reported in the text for combined groups of students. For example, in the text, the proficiency of students in the combined group who reported reading for fun once or twice a month or never or hardly ever is given and compared to the group who reported reading for fun almost every day. However, the table that accompanies that text reports percentages and proficiencies separately for the four groups (almost every day, once or twice a week, once or twice a month, and never or hardly ever). The combined group proficiencies reported in the text and used in all statistical tests are based on *unrounded* estimates (i.e., estimates calculated to several decimal places) of the proficiencies for each group. The percentages shown in the tables are *rounded* to integers. Thus, percentages may not always add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Also, the percentage for a combined group (reported in the text) may differ slightly from the sum of the separate percentages (presented in the tables) for each of the groups that were combined. Therefore, if statistical tests were to be conducted based on the rounded numbers in the tables, the results might not be consonant with the results of the statistical tests that are reported in the text (based on unrounded numbers).

Profile of Idaho

Fourth-Grade School and Student Characteristics

Table O.1 provides a profile of the demographic characteristics of the fourth-grade students in Idaho, the West region, and the nation. This profile is based on data collected from the students and schools participating in the 1992 and 1994 Trial State and National Assessments. As described earlier, the state data and the regional and national data are drawn from separate samples. In 1994, the percentage of fourth graders in Idaho attending public schools was 96 percent. The percentage of Idaho fourth-grade students attending non-public schools, which includes Catholic and other types of non-public schools, was 4 percent.

Schools and Students Assessed

Table O.2 summarizes participation data for Idaho sampled schools and students for both the 1992 and 1994 Trial State Assessments.¹¹ In Idaho, 98 public schools and 7 non-public schools participated in the 1994 fourth-grade reading assessment. These numbers include participating substitute schools that were selected to replace some of the nonparticipating schools from the original sample. The weighted **school** participation rate after substitution in 1994 was 91 percent for public schools and 89 percent for non-public schools, which means that the fourth-grade students in this sample were **directly** representative of 91 percent and 89 percent of all the fourth-grade public and non-public school students in Idaho, respectively.

¹¹ For a detailed discussion of the NCES guidelines for sample participation, see *School and Student Participation Rates for the Reading Assessment and Guidelines for Participation*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1994); or see Appendix B of the *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995).

In each school, a random sample of students was selected to participate in the assessment. In 1994, as estimated by the sample, 3 percent of the fourth-grade public school population and 0 percent of the non-public school population were classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP), while 10 percent in public schools and 14 percent in non-public schools had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). An IEP is a plan, written for a student who has been determined to be eligible for special education, that typically sets forth goals and objectives for the student and describes a program of activities and/or related services necessary to achieve the goals and objectives. Students with disabilities may be categorized as IEP.

Schools were permitted to exclude certain students from the assessment, provided that certain criteria were met. To be excluded, a student had to be categorized as Limited English Proficient or had to have an Individualized Education Plan *and* (in either case) be judged incapable of participating in the assessment. The intent was to assess all selected students; therefore, all selected students who were capable of participating in the assessment should have been assessed. However, schools were allowed to exclude those students who, in the judgment of school staff, could not meaningfully participate. The NAEP guidelines for exclusion are intended to assure uniformity of exclusion criteria from school to school. Note that some LEP and IEP students were deemed eligible to participate and not excluded from the assessment. The students in Idaho who were excluded from the assessment because they were categorized as LEP or had an IEP represented 5 percent of the public school population and 0 percent of the non-public school population in grade 4.

In Idaho, 2,598 public school and 94 non-public school fourth-grade students were assessed in 1994. The weighted **student** participation rate was 96 percent for public schools and 96 percent for non-public schools. This means that the sample of fourth-grade students who took part in the assessment was **directly** representative of 96 percent of the **eligible** public school student population and 96 percent of the **eligible** non-public school student population in **participating** schools in Idaho (that is, all students from the population represented by the participating schools, minus those students excluded from the assessment).

The **overall** weighted response rate (school rate times student rate) was 88 percent and 86 percent for public and non-public schools, respectively. This means that the sample of students who participated in the assessment was **directly** representative of 88 percent of the eligible fourth-grade public school population and 86 percent of the eligible fourth-grade non-public school population in Idaho.

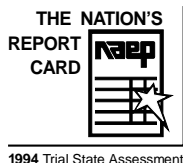


TABLE O.1

*Profile of Fourth-Grade Students in Idaho, the West
Region, and the Nation*

		1992	1994		
		Public	Public	Non-Public	Combined
Demographic Subgroups		Percentage			
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Idaho	White	84 (0.9)	81 (1.1)	90 (5.3)	81 (1.0)
	Black	1 (0.1)	1 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)
	Hispanic	11 (0.8)	13 (0.9)	6 (3.3)	13 (0.9)
	Asian	--- (---)	1 (0.2)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.2)
	Pacific Islander	--- (---)	1 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)
	American Indian	3 (0.4)	3 (0.3)	3 (2.3)	3 (0.3)
West	White	65 (2.1)	66 (2.0)	61 (8.2)	65 (1.7)
	Black	11 (1.6)	7 (1.4)	3 (1.5)	7 (1.3)
	Hispanic	16 (1.9)	20 (1.5)	26 (6.3)	20 (1.3)
	Asian	--- (---)	3 (0.6)	3 (0.8)	3 (0.6)
	Pacific Islander	--- (---)	1 (0.3)	3 (1.5)	1 (0.4)
	American Indian	2 (0.6)	2 (0.3)	3 (2.3)	2 (0.4)
Nation	White	69 (0.5)	68 (0.5)	76 (3.8)	69 (0.2)
	Black	17 (0.4)	16 (0.4)	8 (2.9)	15 (0.2)
	Hispanic	10 (0.3)	12 (0.3) >	11 (1.6)	12 (0.2)
	Asian	--- (---)	2 (0.2)	2 (0.5)	2 (0.2)
	Pacific Islander	--- (---)	1 (0.1)	1 (0.4)	1 (0.1)
	American Indian	2 (0.3)	2 (0.1)	1 (0.6)	2 (0.2)
TYPE OF LOCATION					
Idaho	Central City	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
	Urban Fringe/Large Town	18 (2.8)	26 (2.0)	14 (15.0)	25 (2.0)
	Rural/Small Town	22 (3.3)	19 (2.2)	41 (18.6)	20 (2.2)
Nation	Central City	32 (2.8)	34 (2.1)	46 (4.6)	35 (2.0)
	Urban Fringe/Large Town	41 (3.5)	43 (2.5)	47 (4.6)	43 (2.3)
	Rural/Small Town	27 (2.6)	23 (2.3)	7 (2.7)	21 (2.1)
PARENTS' EDUCATION					
Idaho	Graduated college	38 (1.1)	38 (1.2)	47 (2.1)	38 (1.1)
	Some education after high school	9 (0.7)	8 (0.6)	8 (4.0)	8 (0.6)
	Graduated high school	11 (0.6)	10 (0.7)	14 (5.3)	10 (0.8)
	Did not finish high school	4 (0.5)	4 (0.5)	2 (1.8)	4 (0.5)
	I don't know	38 (1.0)	40 (1.2)	30 (5.0)	39 (1.2)
West	Graduated college	35 (1.9)	40 (2.1)	53 (6.5)	41 (2.0)
	Some education after high school	7 (1.0)	7 (0.8)	3 (1.1)	7 (0.8)
	Graduated high school	10 (1.1)	10 (0.5)	9 (2.2)	10 (0.5)
	Did not finish high school	6 (1.0)	5 (0.6)	3 (2.4)	5 (0.6)
	I don't know	41 (1.8)	38 (1.8)	32 (3.8)	37 (1.7)
Nation	Graduated college	37 (1.1)	41 (1.0)	55 (2.5)	42 (0.9)
	Some education after high school	9 (0.6)	8 (0.5)	7 (0.8)	8 (0.5)
	Graduated high school	13 (0.6)	13 (0.5)	9 (1.0)	13 (0.5)
	Did not finish high school	4 (0.4)	4 (0.4)	2 (0.6)	4 (0.3)
	I don't know	37 (1.1)	34 (0.9)	28 (1.8)	34 (0.8)
GENDER					
Idaho	Male	50 (1.1)	50 (1.1)	56 (5.4)	50 (1.0)
	Female	50 (1.1)	50 (1.1)	44 (5.4)	50 (1.0)
West	Male	52 (1.4)	51 (1.5)	55 (5.5)	51 (1.7)
	Female	48 (1.4)	49 (1.5)	45 (5.5)	49 (1.7)
Nation	Male	51 (0.7)	51 (0.7)	50 (1.7)	51 (0.7)
	Female	49 (0.7)	49 (0.7)	50 (1.7)	49 (0.7)

--- Separate statistics for Asian and Pacific Islander students were not available in 1992. School sample size is insufficient to permit reliable regional results for type of location. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level. The percentages for Race/Ethnicity may not add to 100 percent because some students categorized themselves as "Other."

Following standard practice in survey research, the results presented in this report were produced using calculations which incorporate adjustments for the nonparticipating schools and students. Hence, the final results derived from the sample provide estimates of the reading proficiency and achievement for the **full** population of eligible public and non-public school fourth-grade students in Idaho. However, these nonparticipation adjustments may not adequately compensate for the missing sample schools and students in instances where nonparticipation rates are large.

In order to guard against potential nonparticipation bias in published results, NCES has established minimum participation levels necessary for the publication of 1994 Trial State Assessment results. NCES also established additional guidelines that address four ways in which nonparticipation bias could be introduced into a jurisdiction's published results (see Appendix A).

In the analysis of student data and reporting of results, nonresponse weighting adjustments have been made at both the school and student level, with the aim of making the sample of participating students as representative as possible of the entire eligible fourth-grade population. For details of the nonresponse weighting adjustment procedures, see the *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading*.

**TABLE O.2**

Profile of the Fourth-Grade Population Assessed in Idaho

	1992	1994	
	Public	Public	Non-Public
SCHOOL PARTICIPATION			
Weighted school participation rate before substitution	82%	69%	89%
Weighted school participation rate after substitution	96%	91%	89%
Number of schools originally sampled	123	109	8
Number of schools not eligible	1	1	0
Number of schools in original sample participating	100	74	7
Number of substitute schools provided	19	27	1
Number of substitute schools participating	15	24	0
Total number of participating schools	115	98	7
STUDENT PARTICIPATION			
Weighted student participation rate after makeups	96%	96%	96%
Number of students selected to participate in the assessment	3,022	2,979	98
Number of students withdrawn from the assessment	121	132	0
Percentage of students who were of Limited English Proficiency	2%	5%	1%
Percentage of students excluded from the assessment due to Limited English Proficiency	1%	1%	0%
Percentage of students who had an Individualized Education Plan	8%	8%	1%
Percentage of students excluded from the assessment due to Individualized Education Plan Status	3%	4%	0%
Number of students to be assessed	2,789	2,702	98
Number of students assessed	2,674	2,598	94
Overall weighted response rate	92%	88%	86%

PART ONE

The Reading Proficiency of Fourth-Grade Students in Idaho

Reading involves the interaction between a reader, a text, and a situation.¹² Thus, students' reading comprehension is influenced by the type of material read and the specific purposes for reading. The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program considered students' proficiency in situations that involved reading different kinds of materials for different purposes. The fourth-grade reading assessment measured two global purposes for reading — **reading for literary experience** and **reading to gain information**.¹³ Students' proficiency on each of the two purposes for reading was summarized on separate NAEP reading scales (one for each purpose), which range from 0 to 500. In addition, results for an overall reading scale reflecting average proficiency across the two purposes for reading are also presented. The overall reading scale also ranges from 0 to 500.

This part of the report contains two chapters that describe the reading proficiency of fourth-grade students in Idaho. Chapter 1 compares the overall reading proficiency of public school students in Idaho to the West region and the nation. It also presents the students' average proficiency for the two purposes for reading. Chapter 2 summarizes reading proficiency for subpopulations of public school students defined by race/ethnicity, type of location, parents' education level, and gender. The second chapter also provides the combined results for public and non-public school students, as well as the results for only non-public school students.¹⁴

¹² J.A. Dole, G.G. Duffy, L.R. Roehler, and P.D. Pearson. "Moving from the Old to the New: Research on Reading Comprehension Instruction," in *Review of Educational Research*, 61. (1991). pp. 239-264.

¹³ The eighth- and twelfth-grade national NAEP reading assessments also measured a third purpose for reading — reading to perform a task.

¹⁴ Due to the relatively small sample size for the non-public school students, results are not reported by subpopulation.

CHAPTER 1

Students' Reading Proficiency

In 1994, a renewed emphasis was placed on national education goals when Congress enacted the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Pub. L. 103-227). *Goals 2000* reasserts the importance of establishing and meeting rigorous goals in the education of our nation's students — *All students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy.* Reading ability can be viewed as an enabling skill for reaching these goals. Therefore, concern about attaining these goals and, more specifically, about the reading abilities of our nation's students has increased because recent NAEP results appear to indicate that many students of all ages have difficulty reading thoughtfully.¹⁵ Because reading performance varies in response to texts and contexts, the NAEP assessment measured students' abilities to read different types of materials for different purposes.

The *NAEP Reading Framework* underlying both the 1992 and 1994 assessments views reading as a dynamic, complex interaction between and among the reader, the text, and the context of the reading experience. Readers, for example, bring to the reading process their prior knowledge about the topic, their reasons for reading, their individual reading skills and strategies, and their understanding of differences in text structures.¹⁶

The texts used in the NAEP reading assessment are representative of common reading demands. They were selected from naturally-occurring sources that are typically available to children in and out of school. Students in grade 4 were asked to respond to literary and informational texts, corresponding with the two purposes for reading assessed at grade 4 — reading for literary experience and reading to gain information.

¹⁵ Ina V.S. Mullis, Jay R. Campbell, and Alan E. Farstrup. *The NAEP 1992 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993); Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Jay R. Campbell, Claudia A. Gentile, Christine O'Sullivan, and Andrew S. Latham. *NAEP 1992 Trends in Academic Progress*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1994).

¹⁶ J.A. Langer. "The Process of Understanding: Reading for Literary and Informational Purposes," in *Research in the Teaching of English*, 24. (1990). pp. 229-260; NAEP Reading Consensus Project. *Reading Framework for the 1992 and 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress*. (Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, U.S. Department of Education, 1994).

Reading for literary experience typically involves the reader in vicarious experiences through the story's characters or considerations of how the author explores human events. Literary texts include short stories, poems, and folktales that engage the reader in a variety of ways, not the least of which is reading for fun. Reading to gain information may involve seeking to learn about a topic or to search for specific information. Informational texts include selections from textbooks, magazines, encyclopedias, and other written sources whose purpose is to increase the reader's knowledge. Differences between narrative and informational text typically require students to use different skills and strategies.

In addition to having fourth graders demonstrate their ability to read for two different purposes, the assessment asked students to build, extend, and examine meaning from four stances or types of interactions with the text.

Initial Understanding

Students are asked to provide the overall or general meaning of the selection. This includes first impressions, main points, or themes.

Developing an Interpretation

Students are asked to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences and connections. This includes making connections between cause and effect, analyzing the motives of characters, and drawing conclusions.

Personal Response

Students are asked to make explicit connections between the ideas in the text and their own background knowledge and experiences. This includes comparing story characters with themselves or people they know, or indicating whether they found a passage useful or interesting.

Critical Stance

Students are asked to consider the text objectively. This includes identifying how the author crafted a text with stylistic devices such as mood and tone.

These stances are not considered hierarchical or completely independent of each other. Rather, they are viewed as recursive processes that take place throughout reading and represent different dimensions of the reader's understanding. They provide a frame for generating assessment questions and considering student performance at all levels. All students at all levels should be able to respond to reading selections from all of these stances. What varies with students' developmental and proficiency levels is the amount of prompting or support needed to elicit their responses, the complexity of the texts to which they can respond, and the sophistication of their answers.

This chapter describes the reading proficiency of Idaho's public school fourth graders in 1994 and the comparative results of their regional and national counterparts. In addition, this chapter provides a comparison of reading performance in 1992 and 1994 for Idaho's fourth graders attending public schools.

Table 1.1 shows the distribution of reading proficiency of fourth-grade students attending public schools in Idaho, the West region, and the nation.

1994, Public School Students

The average reading proficiency of fourth-grade public school students in Idaho on the NAEP reading scale was 214. This average was not significantly different from that of students across the nation (213).¹⁷ The lowest performing 10 percent of public school fourth graders in Idaho had proficiencies at or below 164 while the top 10 percent had proficiencies at or above 259. In public schools across the nation, the lowest performing 10 percent of fourth graders had proficiencies at or below 158; the top performing 10 percent of students had proficiencies at or above 261.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

There was a decline in the average proficiency of fourth-grade public school students in Idaho from 1992 to 1994 (221 in 1992 and 214 in 1994). During the same period, there was no significant change in the average proficiency of fourth-grade public school students across the nation (216 in 1992 and 213 in 1994).

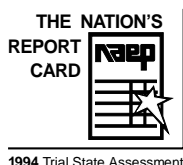


TABLE 1.1

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Public School Students

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
1992						
Idaho	221 (1.0)	180 (1.9)	201 (1.2)	222 (1.1)	242 (1.1)	259 (1.5)
West	213 (1.7)	163 (3.6)	189 (2.0)	215 (1.8)	239 (1.5)	259 (1.6)
Nation	216 (1.1)	168 (1.7)	193 (1.1)	218 (1.4)	241 (1.4)	261 (1.9)
1994						
Idaho	214 (1.4) <	164 (3.0) <	191 (2.4) <	217 (1.8)	240 (1.4)	259 (1.5)
West	213 (2.1)	155 (3.7)	187 (2.8)	218 (2.4)	242 (1.8)	262 (2.6)
Nation	213 (1.1)	158 (2.4) <	188 (1.6)	218 (1.2)	242 (1.2)	261 (1.4)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

¹⁷ Differences reported as significant are statistically different at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that with 95 percent confidence there is a real difference in the average reading proficiency between the two populations of interest.

Proficiency According to Purpose for Reading

As previously indicated, the questions in the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program covered two purposes for reading at grade 4 — reading for literary experience and reading to gain information. Table 1.2 provides results for Idaho, the West region, and the nation according to each reading purpose.

1994, Public School Students

The proficiency of public school students in Idaho in reading for literary experience (217) was not significantly different from that of students across the nation (215). Similarly, in reading to gain information, the proficiency of public school students in Idaho (210) did not differ significantly from that of students across the nation (211).

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

Idaho's public school fourth graders showed a decline from 1992 to 1994 in reading for literary experience. Similarly, in reading to gain information, they exhibited a decline from 1992 to 1994.

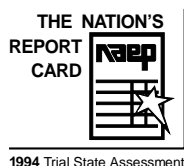


TABLE 1.2

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Public School Students According to Purpose for Reading

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Reading for Literary Experience						
1992 Public						
Idaho	224 (1.2)	180 (2.2)	203 (1.3)	226 (1.2)	247 (1.2)	264 (1.6)
West	217 (1.7)	167 (3.6)	192 (3.0)	219 (2.1)	243 (3.0)	264 (1.9)
Nation	218 (1.1)	169 (1.7)	194 (1.5)	220 (1.3)	244 (1.3)	265 (1.4)
1994 Public						
Idaho	217 (1.3) <	169 (1.8) <	195 (1.7) <	220 (1.0) <	242 (1.0) <	260 (1.1)
West	214 (2.3)	156 (3.5)	188 (3.5)	219 (2.0)	243 (2.4)	263 (2.1)
Nation	215 (1.1)	160 (1.8) <	190 (1.3)	219 (1.1)	244 (1.1)	263 (1.3)
Reading to Gain Information						
1992 Public						
Idaho	217 (1.1)	175 (2.5)	197 (1.6)	218 (0.9)	239 (1.2)	257 (2.0)
West	208 (2.0)	156 (3.0)	183 (2.9)	211 (2.6)	236 (2.1)	257 (3.3)
Nation	213 (1.2)	162 (1.9)	188 (1.5)	215 (1.1)	239 (1.3)	260 (1.8)
1994 Public						
Idaho	210 (1.7) <	156 (2.1) <	184 (2.0) <	213 (2.2)	239 (1.6)	261 (1.7)
West	211 (2.2)	151 (4.3)	184 (3.2)	216 (2.9)	243 (2.3)	264 (2.2)
Nation	211 (1.2)	153 (1.8) <	184 (1.6)	215 (1.6)	241 (1.4)	263 (1.4)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation $>$ ($<$) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

CHAPTER 2

Reading Proficiency of Fourth-Grade Students by Subpopulations

The overall reading proficiency of students across the country presented in the previous chapter provides a global view of the state of reading performance. However, it is also important to look more closely at the performance of subgroups and to consider how different groups of children are progressing in reading. This information can provide educators, policy makers, and concerned citizens with important knowledge about how well students from different backgrounds and with different experiences are developing as readers.

The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program provides additional information about the reading proficiency of important subpopulations by reporting on the performance of various subgroups of the public school student population defined by race/ethnicity, type of location, parents' education level, and gender. In addition, because non-public school students were sampled in the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program, the results for non-public school students as well as those for the combined public and non-public school populations are reported.

Race/Ethnicity

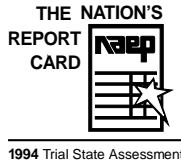
The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program results for different racial/ethnic groups can be compared when the number of schools and students in a racial/ethnic group is of sufficient size to be reliably reported. (See Appendix A for details.) Table 2.1 presents reading proficiency results for White, Hispanic, and American Indian fourth-grade public school students from Idaho.

1994, Public School Students

As shown in Table 2.1, the average reading proficiency of White students in Idaho public schools was higher than that of Hispanic and American Indian students.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

There was a decrease in the average reading proficiency of White and Hispanic public school students in Idaho from 1992 to 1994. There was no significant change in the average reading proficiency of American Indian public school students in Idaho from 1992 to 1994.

**TABLE 2.1**

***Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade
Public School Students by Race/Ethnicity***

		Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
White							
1992	Idaho	224 (0.9)	185 (1.9)	205 (1.6)	225 (1.5)	245 (1.3)	261 (1.4)
	West	222 (1.8)	175 (3.0)	200 (2.2)	224 (1.5)	246 (1.5)	264 (1.5)
	Nation	224 (1.4)	180 (2.7)	203 (1.4)	226 (1.9)	247 (1.4)	266 (1.7)
1994	Idaho	218 (1.4) <	172 (2.3) <	197 (2.2)	221 (1.9)	243 (1.9)	261 (1.8)
	West	223 (2.0)	171 (4.1)	201 (2.3)	227 (2.1)	248 (2.0)	266 (2.1)
	Nation	223 (1.3)	176 (2.0)	202 (1.6)	227 (1.3)	248 (1.1)	266 (2.4)
Hispanic							
1992	Idaho	202 (2.5)	160 (9.3)	184 (4.1)	205 (2.6)	222 (5.6)	237 (2.3)
	West	197 (2.7)	152 (6.8)	174 (3.5)	198 (2.1)	221 (4.3)	242 (2.2)
	Nation	200 (2.2)	151 (4.0)	175 (2.6)	201 (4.3)	226 (3.5)	247 (2.9)
1994	Idaho	189 (3.2) <	136 (5.4)	164 (7.8)	192 (4.4)	216 (4.9)	239 (3.5)
	West	187 (4.3)	132 (8.5)	160 (3.7)	190 (5.1)	216 (3.4)	240 (5.1)
	Nation	190 (2.7) <	136 (4.4)	162 (3.5) <	191 (4.3)	218 (3.8)	242 (3.7)
American Indian							
1992	Idaho	206 (2.7)	170 (5.5)	185 (3.3)	205 (5.3)	226 (16.1)	243 (5.2)
	West	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)
	Nation	206 (5.0)	154 (10.6)	184 (8.4)	210 (7.7)	232 (4.6)	250 (7.7)
1994	Idaho	205 (5.3)	158 (20.4)	185 (8.7)	210 (7.7)	230 (3.7)	252 (4.3)
	West	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)
	Nation	201 (3.6)	148 (6.3)	175 (8.4)	206 (2.7)	230 (5.3)	250 (3.6)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level. *** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Type of Location

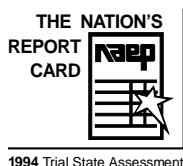
Table 2.2 presents the reading proficiency results for fourth-grade students attending public schools in central cities, urban fringe/large towns, and rural areas/small towns.

1994, Public School Students

The results indicate that the average reading proficiency of Idaho students attending public schools in central cities was not significantly different from that of students in urban fringe/large towns and rural areas/small towns.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

From 1992 to 1994, there was a decrease in the average reading proficiency of students attending public schools in central cities and rural areas/small towns in Idaho. From 1992 to 1994, there was no significant change in the average reading proficiency of students attending public schools in urban fringe/large towns in Idaho.



1994 Trial State Assessment

TABLE 2.2

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Public School Students by Type of Location

		Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Central City							
1992	Idaho	226 (2.3)	187 (3.9)	207 (2.3)	228 (2.5)	247 (1.6)	261 (1.3)
	Nation	208 (1.5)	159 (1.7)	183 (2.3)	210 (1.7)	234 (1.8)	255 (2.5)
1994	Idaho	214 (3.1) <	166 (3.7) <	192 (5.1)	218 (3.5)	239 (2.0) <	259 (3.2)
	Nation	205 (2.3)	148 (2.6) <	176 (3.0)	209 (2.8)	235 (2.6)	256 (2.5)
Urban Fringe/Large Town							
1992	Idaho	222 (2.1)	183 (3.5)	203 (2.4)	223 (2.1)	243 (2.3)	260 (2.8)
	Nation	221 (2.2)	173 (4.3)	197 (2.1)	223 (2.5)	246 (1.9)	265 (2.2)
1994	Idaho	220 (3.3)	174 (7.3)	198 (2.4)	222 (2.7)	244 (2.5)	263 (3.1)
	Nation	220 (1.9)	168 (3.7)	197 (2.9)	224 (1.4)	246 (1.8)	265 (2.8)
Rural/Small Town							
1992	Idaho	219 (1.4)	178 (2.3)	199 (1.6)	220 (1.5)	240 (1.0)	257 (3.1)
	Nation	218 (2.5)	173 (2.3)	197 (4.2)	221 (2.7)	242 (2.3)	260 (3.9)
1994	Idaho	212 (1.8) <	161 (5.0) <	189 (3.0)	215 (2.7)	238 (1.6)	257 (3.1)
	Nation	214 (1.8)	164 (3.1)	190 (2.0)	218 (1.6)	241 (2.1)	260 (1.9)

School sample size is insufficient to permit reliable regional results for type of location.

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Parents' Education Level

Previous NAEP findings have shown that students who report their parents are better educated tend to have higher reading proficiency.¹⁸ Table 2.3 shows the results for fourth-grade public school students reporting that at least one parent graduated from college, at least one parent had some education after high school, at least one parent graduated from high school, neither parent graduated from high school, or they did not know their parents' education level. Note that a substantial percentage of fourth graders indicated that they did not know their parents' education level. Furthermore, research suggests that some fourth graders' reports on parents' education level are almost certainly not accurate descriptions of their parents' actual education levels.¹⁹ Such considerations should be kept in mind when interpreting fourth grade proficiency results for different parental education levels.

1994, Public School Students

As shown in Table 2.3, public school students in Idaho reporting that at least one parent graduated from college demonstrated an average reading proficiency which did not differ significantly from that of students who reported that at least one parent had some education after high school but was higher than that of students who reported that at least one parent graduated from high school, neither parent graduated from high school, or they did not know their parents' education level.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

Public school students in Idaho who reported that neither parent graduated from high school or they did not know their parents' education level had a lower average reading proficiency in 1994 than in 1992. The average proficiency of public school students in Idaho who reported that at least one parent graduated from college, at least one parent had some education after high school, or at least one parent graduated from high school did not change significantly between 1992 and 1994.

¹⁸ Ina V.S. Mullis, Jay R. Campbell, and Alan E. Farstrup. *The NAEP 1992 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993.)

¹⁹ E. Dianne Looker. "Accuracy of Proxy Reports of Parental Status Characteristics," in *Sociology of Education*, 62(4). (1989). pp. 257-276.



TABLE 2.3

*Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade
Public School Students by Parents' Level of Education*

		Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
College graduate							
1992	Idaho	229 (1.2)	191 (2.6)	210 (1.7)	230 (2.6)	250 (1.3)	266 (3.1)
	West	221 (2.8)	171 (3.2)	197 (5.0)	224 (4.1)	247 (4.0)	266 (3.5)
	Nation	224 (1.6)	175 (4.0)	200 (2.4)	227 (2.5)	250 (1.5)	269 (1.3)
1994	Idaho	225 (1.8)	177 (2.7) <	203 (3.1)	228 (1.5)	249 (2.5)	268 (2.1)
	West	224 (2.3)	171 (4.5)	202 (2.8)	229 (2.3)	251 (2.3)	270 (2.7)
	Nation	223 (1.3)	170 (1.6)	200 (1.7)	228 (1.5)	250 (1.7)	269 (1.6)
Some education after HS							
1992	Idaho	229 (2.0)	191 (7.2)	212 (2.1)	231 (3.6)	248 (1.7)	263 (3.3)
	West	224 (3.7)	177 (5.5)	203 (12.6)	225 (1.9)	249 (3.7)	266 (5.9)
	Nation	223 (2.4)	177 (8.0)	202 (3.8)	225 (4.4)	246 (3.2)	266 (7.3)
1994	Idaho	222 (3.3)	180 (9.9)	203 (4.8)	225 (4.1)	243 (6.7)	261 (4.2)
	West	222 (5.0)	175 (9.1)	200 (6.8)	225 (8.1)	248 (6.2)	265 (4.3)
	Nation	222 (2.2)	173 (9.1)	200 (4.3)	227 (3.1)	248 (2.3)	266 (3.2)
High school graduate							
1992	Idaho	215 (2.4)	176 (4.3)	197 (3.9)	218 (2.7)	235 (3.5)	250 (3.8)
	West	211 (4.2)	163 (4.8)	189 (3.4)	212 (6.3)	239 (6.2)	255 (9.3)
	Nation	212 (1.8)	165 (1.0)	190 (2.7)	215 (1.9)	236 (3.0)	254 (2.4)
1994	Idaho	211 (2.2)	164 (4.1)	191 (3.2)	216 (3.6)	237 (0.9)	252 (3.0)
	West	203 (3.9)	142 (5.7)	175 (13.5)	211 (4.2)	234 (4.5)	251 (6.5)
	Nation	208 (1.9)	151 (3.5) <	183 (2.5)	213 (1.2)	236 (2.8)	255 (4.4)
High school non-graduate							
1992	Idaho	206 (4.4)	160 (13.3)	182 (4.8)	207 (8.6)	230 (2.6)	247 (35.4)
	West	196 (5.6)	145 (8.5)	169 (3.7)	196 (5.2)	227 (6.1)	247 (7.5)
	Nation	198 (2.8)	154 (6.4)	175 (8.2)	199 (3.0)	222 (6.4)	243 (4.8)
1994	Idaho	189 (4.6) <	136 (10.5)	164 (22.1)	191 (3.7)	221 (6.0)	242 (6.0)
	West	189 (6.5)	137 (13.0)	157 (13.7)	190 (10.4)	225 (11.0)	239 (6.0)
	Nation	189 (3.4)	139 (7.8)	164 (10.0)	190 (3.2)	217 (4.3)	236 (5.3)
I don't know							
1992	Idaho	213 (1.2)	174 (1.6)	194 (2.3)	214 (1.4)	234 (1.2)	250 (1.5)
	West	208 (1.6)	160 (4.6)	186 (1.6)	211 (1.6)	231 (2.5)	251 (4.9)
	Nation	210 (1.3)	163 (1.9)	188 (1.9)	213 (1.5)	234 (1.9)	253 (2.2)
1994	Idaho	205 (1.6) <	156 (4.2) <	183 (1.6) <	208 (1.6) <	231 (2.1)	249 (2.2)
	West	204 (2.3)	149 (3.9)	178 (4.4)	208 (4.8)	234 (2.5)	254 (3.8)
	Nation	206 (1.3)	152 (3.4)	181 (1.8)	210 (1.2)	234 (1.6)	253 (1.9)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Gender

In general, NAEP reading assessment results for males and females support numerous studies that have revealed gender differences favoring females in reading.²⁰ As shown in Table 2.4, the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program results for Idaho are consistent with those general findings.

1994, Public School Students

In public schools in Idaho, girls exhibited an average reading proficiency which was higher than that of boys.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

In Idaho public schools, the average reading proficiency for boys was lower in 1994 than in 1992. Similarly, the average proficiency for girls was lower in 1994 than in 1992.



TABLE 2.4

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Public School Students by Gender

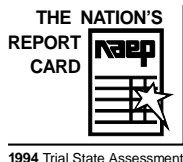
		Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Male							
1992	Idaho	218 (1.1)	177 (2.6)	199 (1.3)	220 (1.4)	240 (1.0)	257 (1.5)
	West	208 (2.6)	159 (7.8)	185 (6.4)	210 (3.2)	235 (3.0)	256 (2.6)
	Nation	212 (1.4)	163 (2.2)	188 (1.9)	214 (1.3)	238 (1.7)	259 (2.1)
1994	Idaho	210 (1.6) <	159 (2.7) <	188 (2.2) <	213 (2.2)	236 (1.2)	255 (2.7)
	West	208 (2.5)	148 (5.9)	180 (4.6)	213 (3.1)	239 (3.5)	258 (1.3)
	Nation	208 (1.3)	151 (1.9) <	182 (1.3)	212 (1.9)	238 (1.3)	258 (2.0)
Female							
1992	Idaho	223 (1.2)	183 (1.4)	203 (1.3)	224 (2.2)	244 (1.6)	260 (2.4)
	West	218 (1.4)	168 (2.4)	194 (2.8)	220 (2.5)	243 (1.9)	263 (2.7)
	Nation	220 (1.1)	173 (1.9)	197 (2.1)	222 (1.8)	244 (1.7)	264 (2.4)
1994	Idaho	218 (1.7) <	170 (3.3) <	195 (2.5) <	221 (1.8)	243 (1.8)	262 (2.8)
	West	218 (2.4)	164 (5.0)	194 (4.8)	222 (3.6)	245 (2.1)	265 (3.7)
	Nation	219 (1.2)	167 (1.9)	195 (1.7)	223 (1.8)	246 (1.3)	265 (2.7)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation $>$ ($<$) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Proficiency According to Purpose for Reading

Table 2.5 provides a summary of results according to each of the two purposes for reading by race/ethnicity, type of location, parents' education level, and gender for public school students.

²⁰ Ian Plewis. "Pupils' Progress in Reading and Mathematics During Primary School: Associations with Ethnic Group and Sex," in *Educational Researcher*, 33. (1991). pp. 133-140; Gita Z. Wilder and Kristin Powell, *Sex Differences in Test Performance: A Survey of the Literature*. (New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1989).

**TABLE 2.5**

Fourth-Grade Public School Students' Average Reading Proficiency According to Purpose for Reading by Subpopulation

		Reading for Literary Experience		Reading to Gain Information	
		1992	1994	1992	1994
		Proficiency			
RACE/ETHNICITY					
White	Idaho	227 (1.2)	221 (1.4) <	219 (1.1)	215 (1.6)
	West	225 (2.0)	223 (2.3)	218 (1.9)	222 (2.0)
	Nation	226 (1.3)	225 (1.3)	222 (1.6)	222 (1.4)
Hispanic	Idaho	205 (2.6)	192 (3.4) <	197 (2.7)	185 (4.2)
	West	204 (3.0)	189 (4.4) <	189 (3.1)	185 (4.3)
	Nation	205 (2.6)	192 (2.7) <	194 (2.2)	186 (2.7)
American Indian	Idaho	207 (2.8)	209 (5.5)	205 (3.1)	200 (5.7)
	West	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)	*** (***)
	Nation	209 (5.0)	203 (3.4)	202 (5.2)	199 (4.2)
TYPE OF LOCATION					
Central City	Idaho	227 (2.4)	219 (2.6)	224 (2.4)	208 (3.9) <
	Nation	211 (1.6)	207 (2.5)	204 (1.8)	202 (2.3)
Urb Fringe/Lrg Town	Idaho	224 (2.5)	222 (3.0)	219 (2.1)	217 (4.3)
	Nation	223 (2.2)	221 (1.9)	218 (2.4)	218 (2.0)
Rural/Small Town	Idaho	223 (1.6)	214 (1.9) <	214 (1.6)	209 (2.1)
	Nation	221 (2.3)	217 (1.9)	215 (3.0)	211 (2.1)
PARENTS' EDUCATION					
College graduate	Idaho	232 (1.5)	226 (1.6)	226 (1.3)	223 (2.2)
	West	224 (3.0)	225 (2.6)	217 (2.8)	223 (2.3)
	Nation	226 (1.6)	225 (1.5)	222 (1.7)	221 (1.4)
Some educ after HS	Idaho	233 (2.7)	225 (3.8)	224 (1.9)	219 (3.6)
	West	229 (3.9)	223 (5.1)	218 (4.2)	221 (5.4)
	Nation	225 (2.9)	225 (2.3)	219 (2.2)	220 (2.5)
HS graduate	Idaho	220 (2.5)	213 (2.9)	209 (2.7)	209 (2.9)
	West	216 (4.0)	203 (4.1)	206 (4.9)	202 (4.1)
	Nation	215 (2.1)	209 (2.0)	208 (2.0)	206 (2.0)
HS non-graduate	Idaho	210 (4.7)	191 (4.1) <	201 (4.7)	188 (5.6)
	West	201 (6.2)	190 (6.7)	189 (5.0)	189 (7.0)
	Nation	202 (3.1)	190 (3.3)	193 (2.7)	187 (4.4)
I don't know	Idaho	216 (1.5)	210 (1.6) <	209 (1.4)	199 (1.9) <
	West	212 (1.6)	206 (2.7)	203 (2.2)	202 (2.5)
	Nation	212 (1.4)	208 (1.3)	207 (1.5)	202 (1.5)
GENDER					
Male	Idaho	220 (1.4)	212 (1.9) <	216 (1.2)	207 (1.8) <
	West	212 (2.7)	207 (2.6)	204 (3.0)	208 (2.4)
	Nation	214 (1.6)	209 (1.3)	210 (1.5)	207 (1.5)
Female	Idaho	227 (1.4)	222 (1.6) <	217 (1.3)	213 (2.0)
	West	222 (1.5)	220 (2.7)	212 (1.6)	215 (2.5)
	Nation	223 (1.1)	222 (1.2)	216 (1.4)	215 (1.2)

School sample size is insufficient to permit reliable regional results for type of location.

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level. *** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Reading Proficiency of Non-Public School Students

The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program marks the first time that non-public school students were assessed at the state level. Therefore, separate non-public school results can be reported for Idaho. Also, results based on a combined sample of public and non-public school students can be presented. Trend results are not presented for non-public school students because they were not included in the 1992 samples. Table 2.6 shows the distribution of overall reading proficiency for non-public school and combined populations in Idaho, the West region, and the nation.

1994, Non-Public School Students

The average reading proficiency of fourth-grade students in non-public schools in Idaho was 219. This average was not significantly different from that of non-public school students across the nation (232).

Public and Non-Public School Student Comparison

The average reading proficiency of fourth-grade students in non-public schools in Idaho was not significantly different from the average for public school students (219 for non-public and 214 for public). For the nation, the average reading proficiency for non-public school students was higher than that of their public school counterparts (232 for non-public and 213 for public).

1994, Public and Non-Public School Students Combined

The average reading proficiency of grade 4 students from Idaho was 214. This average did not differ significantly from that of students across the nation (215). The lowest performing 10 percent of fourth graders from Idaho had proficiencies at or below 164 while the top 10 percent had proficiencies at or above 259. The lowest performing 10 percent of students across the nation had proficiencies at or below 161 while the top 10 percent had proficiencies at or above 263.



1994 Trial State Assessment

TABLE 2.6

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Students, Non-Public and Combined Schools

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
1994 Non-Public						
Idaho	219 (9.7)	171 (18.8)	197 (19.8)	223 (8.7)	245 (10.7)	264 (4.8)
West	224 (6.1)	177 (10.9)	203 (7.8)	225 (5.7)	249 (6.1)	269 (5.3)
Nation	232 (2.5)	189 (3.8)	212 (2.3)	234 (2.5)	254 (2.0)	272 (2.5)
1994 Combined						
Idaho	214 (1.4)	164 (3.1)	192 (2.9)	217 (1.8)	240 (1.5)	259 (1.7)
West	213 (1.9)	156 (4.3)	188 (2.6)	218 (2.6)	243 (1.9)	262 (2.3)
Nation	215 (1.0)	161 (1.9)	191 (1.2)	219 (1.1)	243 (1.1)	263 (1.5)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details).

Table 2.7 presents proficiency by purpose for reading for both the non-public school and combined populations.

1994, Non-Public School Students

The proficiency of non-public school students in Idaho in reading for literary experience (215) was not significantly different from* that of students across the nation (233). Similarly, in reading to gain information, the proficiency of Idaho's non-public school students (224) did not differ significantly from* that of students across the nation (230).

1994, Public and Non-Public School Students Combined

The proficiency of Idaho students in reading for literary experience (217) was not significantly different from that of students across the nation (217). Similarly, in reading to gain information, the proficiency of students in Idaho (211) did not differ significantly from that of students across the nation (213).

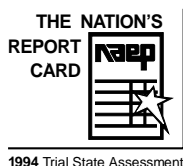


TABLE 2.7

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Students According to Purpose for Reading, Non-Public and Combined Schools

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Reading for Literary Experience						
1994 Non-Public						
Idaho	215 (14.1)	144 (44.4)	197 (18.0)	223 (11.4)	246 (7.5)	265 (11.7)
West	226 (6.0)	178 (14.0)	204 (5.1)	226 (4.7)	251 (5.9)	271 (5.1)
Nation	233 (2.5)	191 (4.4)	213 (3.0)	235 (2.0)	256 (2.8)	274 (1.7)
1994 Combined						
Idaho	217 (1.3)	168 (2.3)	195 (1.9)	220 (0.9)	242 (1.2)	260 (1.0)
West	215 (2.1)	157 (3.0)	189 (2.4)	219 (2.2)	244 (2.0)	264 (2.1)
Nation	217 (1.0)	162 (1.5)	193 (1.3)	221 (1.2)	245 (1.2)	265 (1.2)
Reading to Gain Information						
1994 Non-Public						
Idaho	224 (5.5)	173 (8.2)	205 (6.2)	227 (4.3)	248 (7.6)	267 (5.1)
West	222 (6.3)	173 (8.3)	199 (8.2)	223 (7.2)	248 (4.2)	270 (4.6)
Nation	230 (2.6)	184 (7.1)	208 (2.9)	231 (3.1)	254 (2.9)	274 (2.7)
1994 Combined						
Idaho	211 (1.7)	156 (2.0)	185 (1.9)	214 (1.9)	239 (1.6)	261 (2.5)
West	212 (2.0)	153 (2.5)	185 (2.8)	217 (2.2)	243 (2.3)	264 (2.2)
Nation	213 (1.0)	155 (2.2)	186 (2.0)	217 (0.9)	243 (1.2)	264 (1.3)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details).

* Although the difference may appear large, recall that "significance" here refers to "statistical significance." (See Appendix A for further discussion.)

PART TWO

Reading Achievement Levels

While providing information about what students can do in reading is essential for understanding the current state of reading performance, it is also important to determine whether students' present performance is adequate. Knowing what students *can do* is made even more relevant by also looking at what students *should be able to do*. For that reason, the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) has provided NAEP with achievement levels in reading that set standards for performance in reading at grades 4, 8, and 12.

This report presents data using the student achievement levels as authorized by the NAEP legislation and adopted by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB).²¹ The achievement levels are based on collective judgments, gathered from a broadly representative panel of teachers, education specialists, and members of the general public, about what students should know and be able to do relative to a body of content reflected in the NAEP assessment frameworks. For reporting purposes, the achievement level cut scores are placed on the traditional NAEP scale. For each grade, the results divide the scale into four ranges — *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*, as well as the region *below Basic*.

Initiated in 1990, the levels have been used to report the national and state results in mathematics in 1990 and 1992, as well as in reading in 1992 and 1994. The reading achievement levels were developed by American College Testing (ACT) under contract with NAGB. While setting student achievement levels on the National Assessment is relatively new and developing, the achievement levels are consistent with recent education reform efforts. Some state and local jurisdictions are also developing standards and reporting their test results using them.²²

²¹ P.L. 103-382. Improving America's Schools Act of 1994.

²² States such as Kentucky, Maryland, Colorado, Connecticut, and North Carolina all have standard-setting initiatives resulting in student achievement levels.

Despite the commitment to standards-based reporting of NAEP data, the transition is incomplete. There have been some critical reviews and congressionally mandated evaluations that cast doubt on the interpretability of achievement levels and also on the applicability of the underlying technical methodology used to develop them. These studies were conducted by the General Accounting Office (GAO)²³ and the National Academy of Education (NAE).²⁴ Their findings question, for example, the application of the Angoff method for large scale assessments like NAEP, given the significant modifications required to accommodate the complexity of the NAEP item structure and the multiple cutpoints. They conclude that discretion should be used in making particular inferences about what students at each level actually know and can do. In addition, there were concerns that the proportion of students at certain levels, but particularly at the advanced levels, may be underestimated.

On the other hand, the Angoff procedure is the most widely documented, researched, and frequently used method in the standard-setting field. Many well known experts support the use of a modified-Angoff method on NAEP. Several critics of the NAE studies,²⁵ for example, have reaffirmed the integrity of the process employed by the Board and have concluded that the weight of the empirical evidence presented does not support the NAE's conclusions about achievement levels or the use of the modified-Angoff process. In addition, the Council of Chief State School Officers' advisory panel of state assessment directors, fully aware of the NAE's conclusions, supported the use of the achievement levels to report the 1994 reading results.²⁶

Taken together, the results of the various studies suggest the need for further research and development. To that end, ACT, the NAGB contractor, recently conducted a study in anticipation of the 1994 NAEP reading reports. The study sought to examine the congruence between the reading assessment framework and the descriptions of reading performance embodied in the levels.²⁷ Two different methodologies were used: (1) evaluation of the achievement level descriptions *via* statistical item mapping, and (2) evaluation of the achievement level descriptions *via* judgmental item mapping. It was the consensus of the participants that the reading achievement level descriptions were, in general, consistent with the framework and the 1994 NAEP reading assessment results. However, minor modifications were suggested by the study panelists. These modifications were incorporated into the 1994 achievement level descriptions.

²³ General Accounting Office. *Educational Achievement Standards: NAGB's Approach Yields Misleading Interpretations*. (Washington, DC, 1993).

²⁴ National Academy of Education. *Setting Performance Standards for Student Achievement*. (Stanford, CA: National Academy of Education, 1993).

²⁵ American College Testing. *Technical Report on Setting Achievement Levels on the 1992 National Assessment of Educational Progress in Mathematics, Reading, and Writing*. (Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, 1993); G. Cizak. *Reactions to the National Academy of Education Report*. (Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, 1993); M. Kane. *Comments on the NAE Evaluation of the NAGB Achievement Levels*. (Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, 1993).

²⁶ Education Information Advisory Committee of the Council of Chief State School Officers. *A Resolution of the Education Information Advisory Committee*. (Alexandria, VA, 1994).

²⁷ American College Testing. *Technical Report on the 1992 NAEP Reading Re-visit Study*. (Iowa City, IA: American College Testing, 1995).

It should be noted that the ACT study did not address the applicability of the modified-Angoff procedure for the 1994 reading assessment. Nor did it focus on the reasonableness of actual achievement level cut scores. However, NAGB continues to explore new and innovative methodologies for standard setting for NAEP. In addition, proceedings from a standard-setting conference held in the fall of 1994, jointly sponsored by NCES and NAGB, are due to be released in the spring of 1995. Given the array of nationally known experts in attendance, the findings will undoubtedly provide additional insight into this issue.

In sum, the student achievement levels in this report have been developed carefully and responsibly, and have been subject to refinements and revisions in procedures as new technologies have become available. However, standards-based reporting for NAEP data is still in transition. The NAEP legislation states that the student achievement levels shall be “. . . developed through a national consensus approach . . . used on a developmental basis, . . . and updated as appropriate.” It requires that their developmental status be clearly stated in NAEP reports. Upon review of the available information, the Commissioner of NCES has judged that the achievement levels are in a developmental status. However, the Commissioner and the Governing Board also believe that the achievement levels are useful and valuable in reporting on the educational achievement of American students.

Part Two of this report focuses on results of the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in terms of the NAGB achievement levels. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the achievement level descriptors. In addition, the percentages of public school students in Idaho, the West region, and across the nation who performed at or above each of the achievement levels in 1994 and 1992 are presented. Chapter 4 expands on these results by presenting achievement level data for subgroups — race/ethnicity, type of location, level of parents' education, and gender. Chapter 4 also presents results for students in non-public schools and combined results for both public and non-public school students.

CHAPTER 3

Students' Reading Achievement

The most recent reauthorization of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) continues the Board's responsibilities to set policy for NAEP and to "develop appropriate student achievement levels for each age and grade in subject areas tested" (Pub. L. 103-382). As a result, students' reading proficiencies presented in the previous section can be viewed in the context of established goals for performance. This report next presents results based on the National Assessment Governing Board's goals for students' achievement on the NAEP reading scale.²⁸

Achievement goals are determined through collective judgments about how students *should* perform. These judgments are associated with specific points on the NAEP scale that serve to identify boundaries between levels of achievement for each grade — Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Performance at the Basic level denotes partial mastery of the knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work. The central level, called Proficient, represents solid academic performance. Students reaching this level demonstrate competency over challenging subject matter. Performance at the Advanced level signifies superior performance beyond proficient grade-level mastery. In this report, the proportion of students attaining the three achievement levels are presented for both the 1994 and 1992 assessments.

Definitions of the three levels of reading achievement are given in Figure 3.1. Examples of questions at the achievement levels are also provided. The reading passages which accompany these questions can be found in Appendix B. It should be noted that constructed-response questions occur at all levels of reading achievement.

²⁸ Appendix C briefly describes the process of gathering expert judgments about Basic, Proficient, and Advanced performance — as defined by NAGB policy — on each reading item, combining the various judgments on the various items and mapping them onto the scale, and setting the scale score cutpoints for reporting purposes based on these levels.

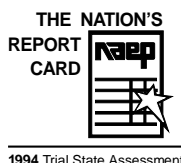


FIGURE 3.1

Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4

The following achievement level descriptions focus on the interaction of the reader, the text, and the context. They provide some specific examples of reading behaviors that should be familiar to most readers of this document. The specific examples are not inclusive; their purpose is to help clarify and differentiate what readers performing at each achievement level *should be able to do*. While a number of other reading achievement indicators exist at every level, space and efficiency preclude an exhaustive listing. The achievement levels are cumulative from Basic to Proficient to Advanced. One level builds on the previous levels such that knowledge at the Proficient level presumes mastery of the Basic level, and knowledge at the Advanced level presumes mastery of both the Basic and Proficient levels.

<p>BASIC LEVEL (212)</p>	<p>Fourth-grade students performing at the Basic level <i>should demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read. When reading texts appropriate for fourth graders, they should be able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences and extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences.</i></p>
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For example, when reading **literary text**, Basic-level students should be able to tell what the story is generally about — providing details to support their understanding — and be able to connect aspects of the stories to their own experiences.

When reading **informational text**, Basic-level fourth graders should be able to tell what the selection is generally about or identify the purpose for reading it; provide details to support their understanding; and connect ideas from the text to their background knowledge and experiences.

<p>PROFICIENT LEVEL (243)</p>	<p>Fourth-grade students performing at the Proficient level <i>should be able to demonstrate an overall understanding of the text, providing inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections to their own experiences. The connection between the text and what the student infers should be clear.</i></p>
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Specifically, when reading **literary text**, Proficient-level fourth graders should be able to summarize the story, draw conclusions about the characters or plot, and recognize relationships such as cause and effect.

When reading **informational text**, Proficient-level students should be able to summarize the information and identify the author's intent or purpose. They should be able to draw reasonable conclusions from the text, recognize relationships such as cause and effect or similarities and differences, and identify the meaning of the selection's key concepts.

<p>ADVANCED LEVEL (275)</p>	<p>Fourth-grade students performing at the Advanced level <i>should be able to generalize about topics in the reading selection and demonstrate an awareness of how authors compose and use literary devices. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to judge texts critically and, in general, give thorough answers that indicate careful thought.</i></p>
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Specifically, when reading **literary text**, Advanced-level students should be able to make generalizations about the point of the story and extend its meaning by integrating personal and other reading experiences with the ideas suggested by the text. They should be able to identify literary devices such as figurative language.

When reading **informational text**, Advanced-level fourth graders should be able to explain the author's intent by using supporting material from the text. They should be able to make critical judgments of the text (including its form and content) and explain their judgments clearly.

**FIGURE 3.1 (continued)*****Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4***

The following questions were selected as examples of the types of questions that students at each of the three achievement levels can respond to effectively. The example questions were selected from the 1992 or 1994 NAEP reading assessments. These questions are based on the stories "Sybil Sounds the Alarm" and "Hungry Spider and the Turtle," which are shown in their entirety in Appendix B. "Sybil Sounds the Alarm" is a fictional account of a historical event that describes the courage of a young colonial girl in riding her horse to warn of the approaching British army. "Hungry Spider and the Turtle" is a fable that presents a humorous portrayal of two characters and the jokes they play on each other.

For the multiple-choice questions, the correct answer is marked with an asterisk. For the constructed-response questions, a description of acceptable answers is provided. Also shown are the national overall percent correct and the percent correct for the students performing within the interval of the indicated level.

Samples of student responses to these and other constructed-response questions in the NAEP reading assessment appear in the *Reading Assessment Redesigned*²⁹ report which provides an in-depth look at the assessment materials and tasks. Also, a presentation of sample student responses is planned for the *1994 NAEP Reading Report Card*.

BASIC LEVEL Example Question		Sybil Sounds the Alarm	
Sybil's father thought that she			
A. was obedient but forgetful			
* B. was courageous and a good rider			
C. could lead the troops against the British			
D. could easily become angry			
1992 Overall Percentage Correct		1992 Conditional Percentage Correct for Basic Interval	
Nation	71 (1.4)	Nation	76 (2.5)

²⁹ J.A. Langer, J.R. Campbell, S.B. Neuman, I.V.S. Mullis, H.R. Persky, and P.L. Donahue. *Reading Assessment Redesigned*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995).

**FIGURE 3.1 (continued)***Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4*

BASIC LEVEL Example Question		Hungry Spider and the Turtle	
<p>Who do you think would make a better friend, Spider or Turtle? Explain why.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>			
<p>Acceptable responses indicated which character would make a better friend and provided appropriate evidence from the story in support of the selection.</p>			
1994 Overall Percentage Acceptable		1994 Conditional Percentage Acceptable for Basic Interval	
Nation	62 (1.4)	Nation	70 (2.6)

PROFICIENT LEVEL Example Question		Sybil Sounds the Alarm	
<p>The information about the statue and stamp helps to show that</p> <p>* A. people today recognize and respect Sybil’s bravery B. people were surprised that George Washington honored her C. the author included minor details D. heroes are honored more now than they were then</p>			
1992 Overall Percentage Correct		1992 Conditional Percentage Correct for Proficient Interval	
Nation	62 (1.5)	Nation	90 (3.0)

**FIGURE 3.1 (continued)***Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4*

PROFICIENT LEVEL		Hungry Spider and the Turtle	
Example Question			
<p>What do Turtle’s actions at Spider’s house tell you about Turtle?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>			
<p>Acceptable responses provided a description of Turtle that is consistent with the traits portrayed by the character in a specific part of the story.</p>			
1994 Overall Percentage Acceptable		1994 Conditional Percentage Acceptable for Proficient Interval	
Nation	41 (1.4)	Nation	66 (3.5)

ADVANCED LEVEL Example Question		Sybil Sounds the Alarm	
<p>How does the author show the excitement and danger of Sybil’s ride?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>			
<p>Acceptable responses described a specific element of the author’s portrayal of Sybil that contributed to the story’s atmosphere and tone.</p>			
1992 Overall Percentage Acceptable		1992 Conditional Percentage Acceptable for Advanced Interval	
Nation	44 (1.7)	Nation	84 (5.6)

**FIGURE 3.1 (continued)***Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4*

ADVANCED LEVEL Example Question		Hungry Spider and the Turtle	
<p>Think about Spider and Turtle in the story. Pick someone you know, have read about, or have seen in the movies or on television and explain how that person is like either Spider or Turtle.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>			
<p>Responses that were rated as <i>Essential or better</i> demonstrated adequate understanding of the character of Spider or Turtle by providing any story-supported character trait and relating or linking that trait to a real world person or character.</p>			
1994 Overall Percentage Essential or Better		1994 Conditional Percentage Essential or Better for Advanced Interval	
Nation	29 (1.3)	Nation	80 (7.0)

Table 3.1 provides the percentage of fourth-grade public school students at or above each achievement level, as well as the percentage of students below the Basic level.

1994, Public School Students

The percentage of public school students in Idaho who were at or above the Proficient level (22 percent) did not differ significantly from that of students across the nation (24 percent).

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

From 1992 to 1994, there was no significant change in the percentage of public school students in Idaho who attained the Proficient level (24 percent in 1992 and 22 percent in 1994). Similarly, there was no significant change in the percentage of public school students across the nation who attained the Proficient level (24 percent in 1992 and 24 percent in 1994).

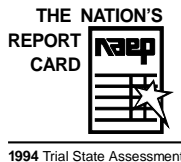


TABLE 3.1

Levels of Fourth-Grade Public School Students' Reading Achievement

	At or Above Advanced	At or Above Proficient	At or Above Basic	Below Basic
	Percentage			
1992 Public				
Idaho	3 (0.5)	24 (1.3)	63 (1.3)	37 (1.3)
West	3 (0.5)	22 (1.6)	53 (1.9)	47 (1.9)
Nation	4 (0.6)	24 (1.2)	57 (1.2)	43 (1.2)
1994 Public				
Idaho	3 (0.5)	22 (1.3)	55 (1.6) <	45 (1.6) >
West	4 (0.7)	24 (1.9)	56 (2.5)	44 (2.5)
Nation	4 (0.5)	24 (1.1)	56 (1.2)	44 (1.2)

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Many students in Idaho were unable to meet the Proficient achievement level that represents solid academic performance in reading. Educators and policy makers will need to look to many sources of information and opinion for explanations of these levels of achievement. Among the possible explanations, several factors should not be overlooked. First, students may not be learning enough in school to reach the achievement levels. In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education warned that “the educational foundations of our society are being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future.”³⁰ In 1990, the president and the governors committed the nation to six goals for education, the third of which called for American students to “leave grades four, eight and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter.”³¹ Many political leaders of this nation continue to express dissatisfaction with the performance of American students. These NAEP findings confirm that a great many American students are not yet performing at high levels.

Second, some students may not be reaching the higher achievement levels because schools may not be teaching the elements of reading that are included on the NAEP assessment, and because the assessment may not be covering some elements of reading included in the school curriculum. No assessment or test can cover all the different areas of reading that are taught in school. The content coverage of the NAEP reading assessment was set by a consensus approach. Teachers, curriculum specialists, subject matter specialists, local school administrators, parents, and members of the general public actively participated in deciding what are the most important elements of reading to be included in the assessment and for students to learn.³²

Third, the Basic, Proficient, and Advanced achievement levels reflect high standards for the 1994 NAEP reading scale. The establishment of achievement levels depends on securing a set of informed judgments of expectations for student educational achievement and on summarizing the individual ratings into collective judgments. These expectations reflect the Board’s policy definitions, which require that students at the central, Proficient level demonstrate “competency over challenging subject matter.” The resulting standards are rigorous.

As measures of performance, both average proficiency scores and percentages of students who score at or above the critical achievement levels on the NAEP scale provide a valuable overall depiction of students’ reading ability.

³⁰ National Commission on Excellence in Education. *A Nation at Risk*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1983). In 1988, then-Secretary Bennett reported that the “precipitous downward slide of previous decades has been arrested, and we have begun the long climb back to reasonable standards.” (p. 1 in *American Education: Making it Work*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1988).).

³¹ U.S. Department of Education. *America 2000: An Education Strategy*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

³² NAEP Reading Consensus Project. *Reading Framework for the 1992 and 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress*. (Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, U.S. Department of Education, 1994).

CHAPTER 4

Reading Achievement of Fourth-Grade Students by Subpopulations

Assessment results repeatedly show differences in performance for subpopulations of students.³³ This chapter presents achievement level results for subgroups of public school students from Idaho defined by race/ethnicity, type of location, level of parents' education, and gender. Also, results are presented for non-public school students and for the combined public and non-public school populations.

Race/Ethnicity

Table 4.1 provides the percentage of public school students at or above each of the three achievement levels and also the percentage below the Basic level for White, Hispanic, and American Indian students.

1994, Public School Students

In 1994, the percentage of White students in Idaho who attained the Proficient level was greater than that of Hispanic students but was not significantly different from that of American Indian students.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

There was no significant change between 1992 and 1994 in the percentage of White, Hispanic, and American Indian public school students in Idaho who performed at or above the Proficient level.

³³ Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Jay R. Campbell, Claudia A. Gentile, Christine O'Sullivan, and Andrew S. Latham. *NAEP 1992 Trends in Academic Progress*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1994).

**TABLE 4.1**

*Levels of Fourth-Grade Public School Students'
Reading Achievement by Race/Ethnicity*

		At or Above Advanced	At or Above Proficient	At or Above Basic	Below Basic
		Percentage			
White					
1992	Idaho	3 (0.6)	27 (1.4)	67 (1.4)	33 (1.4)
	West	5 (0.8)	28 (2.3)	63 (2.4)	37 (2.4)
	Nation	5 (0.8)	30 (1.8)	66 (1.5)	34 (1.5)
1994	Idaho	4 (0.7)	25 (1.5)	60 (1.8) <	40 (1.8) >
	West	5 (0.9)	30 (2.3)	66 (2.4)	34 (2.4)
	Nation	5 (0.7)	30 (1.4)	67 (1.4)	33 (1.4)
Hispanic					
1992	Idaho	0 (0.4)	6 (2.4)	39 (3.9)	61 (3.9)
	West	1 (0.8)	9 (1.5)	34 (2.5)	66 (2.5)
	Nation	1 (0.6)	12 (1.8)	39 (2.1)	61 (2.1)
1994	Idaho	1 (0.9)	8 (1.9)	28 (3.9)	72 (3.9)
	West	1 (0.7)	9 (2.1)	29 (3.6)	71 (3.6)
	Nation	1 (0.5)	10 (1.7)	31 (2.7)	69 (2.7)
American Indian					
1992	Idaho	2 (1.6)	10 (4.2)	42 (5.5)	58 (5.5)
	West	1 (1.2)	13 (6.6)	42 (8.3)	58 (8.3)
	Nation	2 (1.8)	13 (4.6)	49 (6.4)	51 (6.4)
1994	Idaho	1 (1.9)	16 (5.4)	47 (7.8)	53 (7.8)
	West	3 (4.2)	18 (6.8)	50 (6.8)	50 (6.8)
	Nation	2 (2.0)	14 (3.6)	44 (5.0)	56 (5.0)

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Type of Location

Table 4.2 presents reading performance by achievement levels for fourth-grade students attending public schools in central cities, urban fringe/large towns, and rural areas/small towns.

1994, Public School Students

In Idaho, the percentage of students attending public schools in central cities who attained the Proficient level was not significantly different from that of students in urban fringe/large towns or rural areas/small towns.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

From 1992 to 1994, there was no significant change in the percentage of students attending public schools in central cities, urban fringe/large towns, or rural areas/small towns in Idaho who attained the Proficient level.

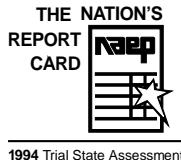


TABLE 4.2

Levels of Fourth-Grade Public School Students' Reading Achievement by Type of Location

		At or Above Advanced	At or Above Proficient	At or Above Basic	Below Basic
		Percentage			
Central City					
1992	Idaho	3 (0.9)	29 (3.4)	70 (3.3)	30 (3.3)
	Nation	3 (0.7)	17 (1.2)	47 (2.3)	53 (2.3)
1994	Idaho	3 (1.0)	21 (2.7)	56 (3.4) <	44 (3.4) >
	Nation	3 (0.6)	19 (1.7)	47 (2.7)	53 (2.7)
Urban Fringe/Large Town					
1992	Idaho	3 (1.0)	25 (2.7)	65 (3.3)	35 (3.3)
	Nation	5 (1.0)	28 (2.4)	62 (2.6)	38 (2.6)
1994	Idaho	4 (1.2)	27 (3.4)	61 (4.8)	39 (4.8)
	Nation	5 (1.1)	29 (1.9)	63 (2.0)	37 (2.0)
Rural/Small Town					
1992	Idaho	3 (0.6)	22 (1.7)	60 (1.8)	40 (1.8)
	Nation	3 (1.4)	23 (2.7)	61 (2.6)	39 (2.6)
1994	Idaho	3 (0.7)	20 (1.8)	53 (2.0)	47 (2.0)
	Nation	4 (0.8)	23 (1.8)	56 (2.7)	44 (2.7)

School sample size is insufficient to permit reliable regional results for type of location.

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Parents' Education Level

Table 4.3 shows the reading achievement level results for fourth-grade public school students who reported that at least one parent graduated from college, at least one parent had some education after high school, at least one parent graduated from high school, neither parent graduated from high school, or they did not know their parents' education level.

1994, Public School Students

In Idaho, the percentage of students reporting that at least one parent graduated from college who performed at or above the Proficient level was not significantly different from that of students who reported that at least one parent had some education after high school but was larger than that of students who reported that at least one parent graduated from high school, neither parent graduated from high school, or they did not know their parents' education level.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

The percentage of public school students in Idaho who reported that at least one parent graduated from college, at least one parent had some education after high school, at least one parent graduated from high school, neither parent graduated from high school, or they did not know their parents' education level who attained the Proficient level did not change significantly between 1992 and 1994.

**TABLE 4.3**

*Levels of Fourth-Grade Public School Students'
Reading Achievement by Parents' Level of Education*

		At or Above Advanced	At or Above Proficient	At or Above Basic	Below Basic
		Percentage			
College graduate					
1992	Idaho	5 (1.0)	34 (2.2)	73 (1.9)	27 (1.9)
	West	6 (1.4)	29 (3.5)	61 (3.4)	39 (3.4)
	Nation	7 (0.9)	33 (1.9)	66 (2.0)	34 (2.0)
1994	Idaho	6 (0.9)	32 (2.4)	67 (2.2)	33 (2.2)
	West	7 (1.8)	33 (2.6)	68 (2.4)	32 (2.4)
	Nation	7 (1.2)	32 (1.8)	66 (1.6)	34 (1.6)
Some education after HS					
1992	Idaho	4 (1.3)	32 (3.2)	75 (2.9)	25 (2.9)
	West	6 (3.2)	29 (4.9)	66 (6.0)	34 (6.0)
	Nation	6 (2.2)	28 (3.2)	65 (3.3)	35 (3.3)
1994	Idaho	3 (2.3)	26 (4.5)	66 (4.8)	34 (4.8)
	West	5 (2.2)	30 (5.8)	63 (6.9)	37 (6.9)
	Nation	5 (1.3)	31 (3.0)	65 (2.9)	35 (2.9)
High school graduate					
1992	Idaho	1 (0.8)	17 (4.2)	57 (4.5)	43 (4.5)
	West	2 (1.9)	20 (6.9)	50 (5.4)	50 (5.4)
	Nation	2 (1.0)	18 (2.3)	53 (2.6)	47 (2.6)
1994	Idaho	2 (1.3)	18 (2.5)	54 (3.2)	46 (3.2)
	West	1 (0.8)	16 (4.2)	48 (6.2)	52 (6.2)
	Nation	2 (1.0)	19 (2.6)	51 (2.1)	49 (2.1)
High school non-graduate					
1992	Idaho	2 (3.3)	13 (4.6)	45 (7.1)	55 (7.1)
	West	1 (1.8)	12 (4.5)	34 (5.2)	66 (5.2)
	Nation	1 (1.4)	10 (2.6)	34 (3.9)	66 (3.9)
1994	Idaho	0 (0.3)	8 (4.2)	32 (6.6)	68 (6.6)
	West	0 (0.7)	9 (5.3)	35 (6.5)	65 (6.5)
	Nation	1 (1.1)	7 (2.6)	29 (3.7)	71 (3.7)
I don't know					
1992	Idaho	1 (0.5)	16 (1.5)	54 (2.0)	46 (2.0)
	West	2 (1.0)	16 (2.0)	48 (2.7)	52 (2.7)
	Nation	2 (0.5)	17 (1.3)	51 (1.8)	49 (1.8)
1994	Idaho	1 (0.4)	14 (1.6)	45 (2.0) <	55 (2.0) >
	West	2 (1.2)	18 (1.8)	47 (2.7)	53 (2.7)
	Nation	2 (0.4)	17 (1.4)	48 (1.4)	52 (1.4)

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Gender

Table 4.4 provides the achievement level results by gender for fourth-grade public school students.

1994, Public School Students

The percentage of males in Idaho public schools who attained the Proficient level was smaller than that of females.

1992 vs 1994, Public School Students

There was no significant change in the percentage of males who performed at or above the Proficient level from 1992 to 1994. Similarly, there was no significant change in the percentage of females who were at or above the Proficient level from 1992 to 1994.



TABLE 4.4

Levels of Fourth-Grade Public School Students' Reading Achievement by Gender

		At or Above Advanced	At or Above Proficient	At or Above Basic	Below Basic
		Percentage			
Male	1992				
	Idaho	2 (0.5)	22 (1.4)	60 (1.4)	40 (1.4)
	West	2 (0.9)	18 (2.0)	48 (3.0)	52 (3.0)
	Nation	3 (0.6)	21 (1.4)	53 (1.8)	47 (1.8)
	1994				
	Idaho	2 (0.7)	18 (1.4)	51 (2.2) <	49 (2.2) >
	West	3 (0.9)	22 (1.7)	51 (3.3)	49 (3.3)
	Nation	3 (0.6)	20 (1.2)	50 (1.5)	50 (1.5)
	Female				
Female	1992				
	Idaho	4 (0.9)	26 (1.8)	66 (1.8)	34 (1.8)
	West	4 (1.4)	25 (2.0)	59 (2.3)	41 (2.3)
	Nation	5 (0.8)	26 (1.6)	61 (1.5)	39 (1.5)
	1994				
	Idaho	4 (0.7)	25 (1.7)	59 (2.0)	41 (2.0)
	West	5 (1.0)	27 (2.6)	61 (2.9)	39 (2.9)
	Nation	5 (0.6)	28 (1.5)	61 (1.5)	39 (1.5)

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details). If the notation > (<) appears, it signifies that the value for public school students in 1994 was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

Reading Achievement of Non-Public School Students

Table 4.5 provides the percentage of fourth-grade students at or above each achievement level for the non-public school and combined populations. Trend results are not presented for non-public school students because they were not included in the 1992 samples.

1994, Non-Public School Students

The percentage of non-public school students in Idaho who were at or above the Proficient level (28 percent) did not differ significantly from* that of students across the nation (38 percent).

Public and Non-Public School Student Comparison

The percentage of non-public school students in Idaho who were at or above the Proficient level (28 percent) was not significantly different from that of public school students (22 percent). For the nation, the percentage of non-public school students who attained the Proficient level (38 percent) was higher than that of their public school counterparts (24 percent).

1994, Public and Non-Public School Students Combined

The percentage of students in Idaho who were at or above the Proficient level (22 percent) was somewhat lower than that of students across the nation (25 percent).

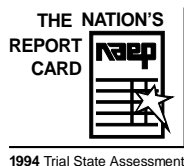


TABLE 4.5

Levels of Fourth-Grade Students' Reading Achievement, Non-Public and Combined Schools

	At or Above Advanced	At or Above Proficient	At or Above Basic	Below Basic
Percentage				
1994 Non-Public				
Idaho	4 (4.0)	28 (6.4)	64 (10.6)	36 (10.6)
West	7 (2.3)	31 (5.8)	66 (7.4)	34 (7.4)
Nation	8 (1.3)	38 (2.7)	75 (2.5)	25 (2.5)
1994 Combined				
Idaho	3 (0.5)	22 (1.2)	56 (1.6)	44 (1.6)
West	4 (0.6)	25 (1.7)	56 (2.3)	44 (2.3)
Nation	5 (0.5)	25 (1.0)	58 (1.1)	42 (1.1)

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within ± 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference (see Appendix A for details).

* Although the difference may appear large, recall that "significance" here refers to "statistical significance." (See Appendix A for further discussion.)

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